

OUT OF THE DEPTHS
(DE PROFUNDIS)

*A Collection of Articles
on the Russian Revolution*

Translated and Edited

by

WILLIAM F. WOEHLIN

Foreword

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Bernice Glatzer Rosenthal

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FOREWORD

"As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten,
Be zealous, therefore, and repent."

Revelation 3:19

Out of the Depths is permeated with philosophical themes and literary and apocalyptic allusions which derive from the Russian religious revival of the early twentieth century. Some of the contributors were themselves major figures in the revival. All were familiar with the hopes and fears it aroused, believers in the sanctity of the individual, upholders of ethical and moral norms grounded in religious faith. To them the Bolshevik Revolution represented, variously, spiritual bankruptcy, the "Reign of Antichrist," the "triumph of the Beast." Regarding it as an absolute catastrophe, they blamed it on the sins of the Russian intelligentsia. Determined not to succumb to despair-induced paralysis, they intended *Out of the Depths* to be a weapon of spiritual resistance to Bolshevism, to inspire the formation of a new intelligentsia that would renounce its false doctrines and engender a national resurrection, a new Russia, purified of sin and permeated with Christian principles.

The 1890s were the seedtime of the religious revival. From the very beginning it contained two major trends: Idealism and Symbolism. Idealists, deeply influenced by Immanuel Kant and (later on) by neo-Kantian philosophers, sought moral and ethical norms and hoped to embody them in a society ruled by law. Among them were Nikolai Berdiaev, Sergei Bulgakov, Petr Struve, Aleksandr Izgoev, and Semen Frank, formerly Marxists who, objecting to Georgii Plekhanov's determinist interpretation of history, had attempted, around the turn of the century, to supplement Marxist economics with Kantian ethics and epistemology in order to carve out a sphere of autonomous human activity. As Marxists, they had combatted Populist romanticization of the peasant and Populist subjectivity and this orientation remained; they wished to formulate a world view based on objective knowledge and rational choice. By the early 1900s, they believed that morality and ethics must be rooted in religion. Symbolists, a group of writers and painters who rejected the Populist dictum that art must preach a social message, were less interested in formal philosophy and scorned economic and political issues. Esteeming imagination and fantasy, they found artistic inspiration in "other worlds than ours" and in the inscrutable depths of the human soul. They wanted freedom *from* society, freedom to create, to express their own ideals and values. Deeply influenced

by Friedrich Nietzsche, they viewed the artist as Nietzsche's superman. In contrast to Idealists who emphasized law, duty, ethical and moral norms, Symbolists championed subjectivity and were, in many respects, antinomian. But the two groups found common ground in their focus on the individual, their emphasis on spiritual values, and their disdain for positivism and materialism. Although most of the contributors to *Out of the Depths* were or had been Idealists, they were familiar with Symbolist thought, especially Symbolist interpretations of Russian literature, and quoted Symbolist poetry. Moreover, they published in the same journals, indeed collaborated on *Novyi put'* (New Path) and *Voprosy zhizni* (Problems of Life), attended the same salons and discussed each others views in groups such as the Religious Philosophical Society.

The Religious Philosophical Society was founded in St. Petersburg in 1901 by the Symbolist writers Dmitrii S. Merezhkovskii and Zinaida Hippus, in order to proselytize their "new religious consciousness," their conviction that religion is the prime human spiritual and psychological need. They were searching for new interpretations of Christianity, hoping to make it more relevant to the problems of the modern world. The Society turned out to be a milestone in Russian intellectual life. Featuring debates between the intelligentsia and the clergy on burning issues of the day (i.e., Tolstoi and the Russian Church, Christian attitudes toward sex, Gogol', and Christianity), it attracted a broad spectrum of the St. Petersburg intelligentsia. Indeed, some clergymen even viewed it as a "mission to the intelligentsia." In 1903, however, Konstantin Pobedonostsev, Overprocurator of the Holy Synod, ordered the Society closed because of the forum it offered for heretical views. In its two years of existence, however, it provided a gathering place for intellectuals interested in religious and psychological questions and stimulated further religious thought. The high level of the debates made interest in religion intellectually respectable, as did the founders' desire to divorce religion from reaction. The closing of the Society, moreover, demonstrated to many hitherto apolitical intellectuals, that their religious search required the bourgeois civil liberties, such as freedom of speech, some had formerly disdained. Revived in 1907, the Society lasted until 1916, but without clergy participation in the debates. Branches were founded in Moscow and Kiev. Berdiaev, Bulgakov, and Struve were among the most prominent members. Here, and in various publications, they developed their critique of the radical intelligentsia that formed the major theme of *Signposts* (1909) and *Out of the Depths* (1918).

Particularly influential on the religious revival in general and on Idealists and Symbolists in particular, was the philosophy of Vladimir Solov'ev (1853-1900). Preaching "all-unity" (*vse-edinstvo*) he sought to encompass all aspects of reality in an integrated whole, and to unite science, philosophy, theology, and art. Predicting a crisis of Western philosophy, he attacked Positivism, combatted Nietzsche's rejection of Christian morality, maintained that Christ-

ian values and ideals were the essential basis of a good and just society and considered art a theurgy, a means to transfigure the world. An advocate of Christian ecumenism and a philo-Semite, he polemicized against narrow nationalism and religious bigotry. Toward the end of his life, he became obsessed with the power of evil, predicting the triumph of "pan-Mongolism" (the destruction of the decadent West by an emergent and barbaric East) in 1893 and then, in 1900, proclaimed the imminent advent of the Antichrist in the guise of a benefactor of humanity. References to "pan-Mongolism" and apocalypticism indicate the contributors' awareness of his thought, e.g., Askol'dov's suggestion that Napoleon was the model for Solov'ev's "Antichrist," because of Napoleon's cynical use of religion.

Out of the Depths also shows the continuing influence of Slavophilism, the belief that Russia has a distinct national essence, a distinct spirituality, rooted in Russian Orthodoxy, and must not imitate the West. Slavophiles and those they influenced regarded Western society as mechanical and atomistic, opposed Western individualism as egoistic, disliked the market economy, and scorned the bourgeois societies of the West as philistine. They proposed a distinctly Russian solution to Russia's problems—*sobornost'*—organic unity in which individuality is retained.* Several contributors also allude to Dostoevskii's characterization of the nature of the Russian soul—god-like when motivated by religion but bestial without it.

It was these philosophic influences, not economic considerations, that shaped the contributors' hatred of Bolshevism. Convinced that atheism and materialism are deeply destructive to the human spirit, intrinsically subversive of culture and society, they had long predicted that the relativist and utilitarian morality of the radical intelligentsia must inevitably lead to treating people as means rather than as ends. For years, they had inveighed against anarchism as egoism, solipsism, and insisted that its inexorable result is *lex talionis*, the war of all against all. Contemporaneously, they had charged that the fruit of socialism is despotism, that socialism's concentration of all power in the state must result in the sacrifice of the individual to the collective, or to whatever group seizes power and claims to represent society, i.e., the dictatorship of the proletariat. Proponents of national harmony, organic unity, they objected to the very idea of class as socially divisive. Russian patriots, they also opposed Bolshevik internationalism; several essayists criticize the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk for dismembering Russia.

The literary allusions of *Out of the Depths* also derive from the religious revival of the early twentieth century, especially from Symbolist re-interpretations of Russian literature. In contrast to Populist critics who had focused on the sociological import of literature, Symbolist critics emphasized the moral, psychological, and religious significance of the Russian classics. That there is

*See the Glossary.

a direct line from Symbolist literary criticism (which was discussed at the Religious Philosophical Society) to *Out of the Depths* is particularly obvious in Berdiaev's essay on the "Russian specters" of the Revolution. Despite the anti-national character of the Revolution, Berdiaev claimed, it embodied a distinctively Russian style, reflected certain distinctively national peculiarities, "Russian demons," which must be recognized and exorcised. The moralistic reflections of Tolstoi, the metaphysical dialectics of Dostoevskii, and the nihilistic demons conjured up by Gogol', are the old national ills and sins that led to the Revolution and defined its character. Berdiaev's treatment of Tolstoi, Dostoevskii, and Gogol' is particularly indebted to Merezhkovskii's interpretations, which were published and widely discussed in the early twentieth century. Merezhkovskii treated Tolstoi as an example of flesh without spirit, and claimed that he was devoid of true religious feeling, indifferent to the individual and hostile to culture. Similarly, Berdiaev asserted that there was nothing prophetic about Tolstoi, that he lacked a sense of personality, and that he preached a false god, a false holiness, and a false morality. He considered Tolstoi a collectivist by nature, blamed the passivity Tolstoi preached for Russian defeats in World War I, and criticized Tolstoi's anarchism for reinforcing and justifying the antistate orientation of the Russian intelligentsia. Berdiaev's critique of Dostoevskii as the prophet of the Russian Revolution, the writer who understood its metaphysical and religious significance, recalls Merezhkovskii's 1906 book *Dostoevskii: Prophet of the Russian Revolution*. In this and other works, Merezhkovskii treated Smerdiakov as the symbol of the simple people, corrupted by the preaching of the atheistic intelligentsia, whose nuances they were unable to grasp. He maintained that Ivan Karamazov's statement: "If there is no God, all is permissible," made Ivan morally responsible for the patricide, even though Smerdiakov, his lackey, was the actual killer. *Signposts'* condemnation of the entire intelligentsia in effect broadens and continues this indictment, which emerges as one of the main themes, and with an "I told you so" connotation, of *Out of the Depths*.

Berdiaev's third "Russian specter," Gogol', was a Symbolist favorite. Nineteenth-century critics had interpreted Gogol' as a realistic writer, but Andrei Belyi admired his ability to create a world that was simultaneously real and unreal and Valerii Briusov described his work as a "great and terrible caricature of reality which a great artist has mesmerized decades of readers into taking for a mirror image of reality." To Merezhkovskii, Gogol's writing constituted "religious activity," for Gogol's main theme was man's struggle with the devil in all his guises; Chichikov and Khlestakov, for example, were symbols of the devil. Influenced by these views, Berdiaev stressed Gogol's perception of evil, asserting that the evil spirits Gogol' saw in static form have escaped to freedom and are now having an orgy, grimacing over the shuddering body of unhappy Russia. He termed Soviet agrarian policy a "Chichikovian undertaking," for it operates with dead souls, and lamented that the Revolution has given the

Chichikovs and the Khlestakovs greater scope for their schemes than ever before. The decrees of the Soviet regime, he said, were "gogolian" and the Revolution itself, the ultimate gogolian epic. Petr Struve also alluded to Gogol', calling the Soviet regime "gogolian Russia in a red nightcap" except that the "Inspector General" was no longer a comedy. This criticism of the giants of Russian literature was part of the *mea culpa* of *Out of the Depths* and reflected the contributors' desire to purify the national spirit from the spirit of demons.

The allusions several contributors make to a new church also stem from the religious revival of the early twentieth century. Dostoevskii's charge that the Russian Orthodox Church was in a "state of paralysis" induced by its subservience to the state influenced persons active in the religious revival to urge reforms that would free the Church. The "worldly divine" in Bulgakov's contribution argues that Caesaropapism is a heresy, and that the union of Autocracy and Orthodoxy was only historical and has now been dissolved. The Church is free, even though it is persecuted. This is an allusion to Merezhkovskii's belief that the Orthodox Church is so intrinsically linked to Autocracy that an entirely new church is necessary. He believed the Second Coming of Christ was imminent and expected the promulgation of a "Third Testament." Resenting Merezhkovskii's heresy as well as the latter's preachment of a "religious revolution," Bulgakov castigated Merezhkovskii as one of the intriguing literateurs who flirted with revolution before it bared its teeth. Askol'dov believed that the Church would emerge from the revolution renewed and reinvigorated; open enmity, even persecution, he maintained, is preferable to the Church's loss of its integrity.

Apocalypticism, a major theme of the art and literature of the Silver Age, especially Symbolist poetry and prose, was also prominent in *Out of the Depths*. Symbolist apocalypticism, inspired, in part, by Solov'ev and Merezhkovskii, was initially apolitical, but with the Revolution of 1905 it assumed a social and political cast. Intellectuals who had shunned the vulgar crowd attempted, in the words of Viacheslav Ivanov, to "go forth to meet the folk soul." They found the sectarians particularly fascinating and their apocalyptic lore and legend a rich store for artistic reinterpretation. Indeed, apocalyptic imagery had long been used by opponents of the Autocracy ever since the Time of Troubles and formed a long-standing element in the Russian religious tradition. Thus, as Russia entered a new Time of Troubles, the apocalyptic strain in the Russian heritage came to the fore. Merezhkovskii began to promulgate a "religious revolution" and maintained that the intelligentsia were practicing "Christianity without Christ"; Ivanov and Chulkov formulated an apocalyptic political theory, "mystical anarchism"; and Berdiaev proclaimed "we have gone beyond the foundation of an entire historical epoch; we are entering a period of terrible revelations." As the Revolution ended and Russian society returned to normalcy, apocalyptic expectations died down, only to revive, and with infinitely greater intensity, in 1917.

Great expectations can lead to great disappointment. The virulent apocalypticism which surfaced in 1917 was fed by a "bounce-back effect," the collapse of the hopes of 1914. Then, it seemed to many Russians, the nation's problems were being solved. Industrialization was proceeding rapidly; agricultural production was increasing; plans for education were being implemented. The triumphant appearances of Diaghilev's *Ballet Russe* in Paris and London signalled Russian culture's coming of age, Russia's parity with the West. Intellectuals were coming to realize the desirability of rule by law; there was widespread interest, for example, in the juridical theories of Lev Petrazhitskii. Liberals dissatisfied with Kadet ideology were beginning to coalesce in new groupings, searching for new ways to end the impasse between tsar and Duma. These liberals shared the Kadet emphasis on civil liberties, rule by law, and social reform, but stressed authority, hierarchy, social order and insisted that needed change be accomplished by duly constituted bodies. Their greatest fear was anarchy, mass action, mob rule. Struve, Izgoev, Kotliarevskii, and Novgorodtsev had been involved, in different ways, and more or less directly, in this new development, envisioning peaceful change, an internal process of spiritual and cultural renewal that would engender deeply rooted political and social progress. These hopes were blasted by the social upheaval and chaos induced by war and revolution.

The Great War itself was another disappointment. Berdiaev had believed that it would awaken the religious spirit of Russia. Bulgakov had agreed, expecting the war to destroy philistinism. Struve had hoped that the war would stimulate moral development; individuals would set aside their particular interests for the good of Russia. Initially, the war did stimulate patriotism; there was, for example, a sharp decline in strikes. Russians, like their counterparts all over Europe, expected a quick victory. Even Struve, who predicted a long war in 1914 and foresaw Germany's defeat and the ensuing moral-psychological crisis, was strangely oblivious to the destructive effects on Russia of a long war.

By 1916 the effects were all too obvious. The collapse of the economy, the spectre of famine, war weariness at the front and demoralization in the rear, are too well known to require repetition here. The March Revolution was almost universally hailed. Berdiaev interpreted it as a patriotic rather than a class phenomenon, maintaining that the bonds of history are stronger than the bonds of class. Expecting a new order, he exulted "the St. Petersburg period is over. Bureaucracy is dead." As heirs to authority, most Kadets welcomed the end of Autocracy, but were awed by their responsibilities. Fearful of a resurgent right and civil war on one hand, and mob rule on the other, they failed to agree on a positive program. Their authority simply eroded.

As the traditional authorities of state and church were discredited and the Russian polity itself disintegrated, apocalyptic visions of a new order intensified. Symbolist and Futurist poets preached a "revolution of the spirit," the

end of bourgeois society and the beginning of a new order. It was the Bolshevik version of the Kingdom of God on Earth, however, that prevailed. The Symbolist poets Andrei Belyi and Aleksandr Blok accepted the Bolshevik Revolution, even though they remained opposed to materialism and Positivism, because they believed it was the purifying fire through which Russia must pass, the necessary prelude to a new order of freedom, beauty, and love. Bulgakov's "renowned writer" echoes some of their views. From the Futurist perspective, Vladimir Maiakovskii saw the "preachment of a new beauty" over the conflagration of burning libraries and Velimir Khlebnikov expected a new world order to emerge out of cosmic upheaval, the reconciliation of nature and science and the total transformation of the human psyche in the machine age.

The authors of *Out of the Depths* were aware of this type of apocalypticism and reacted against it. Their apocalypticism was quite different, totally devoid of allusions to the fire, flood, and earthquakes of other eschatological scenarios. They saw no redemptive features in anarchy, mob rule, terror, or despotism, and were aghast at the general destruction. For years they had warned of the dire consequences of atheistic socialism and anarchism and had foretold the consequences of the intelligentsia's mystique of revolution. Now they saw their worst predictions coming true. January 1918 brought two further shocks: the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly and the murder of Kadet political prisoners. By March 1918 all non-Bolshevik parties had been outlawed, the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk had been signed, and civil war was beginning. Enveloped in despair, the authors still dared to hope that Russia would rise from the dead.

Their apocalypticism featured repentance, spiritual renewal, resistance to evil, national resurrection. Describing Bolshevism variously as "pure evil," the "dark abyss," the work of Lucifer, of the Beast, of Antichrist, they totally denied that it contained any creative potential and referred to the "full depths of our fall." Askol'dov stated that Bolshevism's only positive feature is that it separates good and evil, thereby making it easier to identify the good. He expected catastrophe to stimulate religious creativity, inspire heroic deeds, martyrdom for Christ, and maintained that since Russians were now living in the realm of Antichrist, the triumph of Christ was imminent. Russia will be the chief arena of the Final Conflict. Izgoev believed that, having been forced to learn the terrible lesson of socialism in practice, Russians would come to their senses. None of the contributors expected the Bolshevik regime to last.

Calling upon the dormant Christian consciousness of Russia, the authors took upon themselves the mission of creating a new Russian intelligentsia. The atheistic radical intelligentsia they viewed as the greatest sinner: the "tempter," Satan, the Devil, even the Beast of the Apocalypse. Blasphemy, the denial of God, incidentally, is an attribute of the Beast (*Revelation* 13:5, 6), who gains power but is overcome by the saints. To overcome Bolshevism, the intelligentsia must renounce its false doctrines, repent, return to religion. All during the

Silver Age Idealists and Symbolists had made similar charges—socialism lacks spiritual values, radicals preach a false doctrine of man, ignore his spiritual and emotional needs, but the bitterness and the anguish of *Out of the Depths* were singular. Kotliarevskii castigated what he called the pathology of the intelligentsia: self-will, class hatred, subjective moralizing. Murav'ev accused the intelligentsia of anointing the people with "dead water" instead of the "living water" of Christianity. He compared the intelligentsia to Delilah, who betrayed Samson, and the people to Samson who destroyed the entire temple. Novgorodtsev lambasted the "venom of socialism" and the "poison of *narodnichestvo*"* (the latter because of its struggle with state power). Scornful of the rationalistic Utopia preached by the left, their delusion that an earthly paradise can be created, he mocked their belief that suffering and evil can be defeated by reordering social relations, their conviction that human reason can resolve the contradictions of history, the dissonances of the world. As in previous writings, he counseled moderation, compromise, respect for law. Berdiaev claimed that intelligentsia maximalism is a perversion of apocalypticism, which he defined as the striving toward a spiritual kingdom; in contrast to Novgorodtsev, he considered apocalypticism positive and creative, asserting that true Christians look forward to the Kingdom of God in Heaven, not the materialistic Utopia of the left, a modern counterpart of the temptation of Christ in the wilderness. He believed that Russians have a unique sense of the Antichrist which renders them particularly susceptible to illusions created by the Antichrist, who leads them away from reality toward the Kingdom of Shadows. Struve, too, was bitterly critical of the intelligentsia, especially of their hostility toward the state and their lack of true patriotism, but he also faulted the Autocracy for opposing reform and encouraging the cultured classes to stay out of politics. Like several other contributors, Struve maintained that the moral and idealistic aspects of socialism derive from Christianity and liberalism. Moreover, Struve argued, Western socialism emerged after a long process of spiritual and cultural development, but in Russia the masses perceived only its materialistic aspects. Motivated by greed and rage, they interpreted intelligentsia sloganeering as a sanction for destruction and plunder, as the promise of a society of consumption without production.

Most of the authors were widely read and well-travelled, but their anger led them to view socialism and anarchism as Western imports. Nikolai Chernyshevskii, Mikhail Bakunin, and their followers, they insisted, were alien to the true spirit of Russia which is Orthodox. Some of the authors considered Peter Chaadaev and Vladimir Solov'ev the spiritual ancestors of the Russian religious renaissance because they opposed reaction and insisted that reform must stem from a religious base. Frank regretted that Russian intellectuals were not influenced by Western Christian Socialists such as John Ruskin and William Mor-

*See the Glossary.

ris. Ivanov resisted the orthographic reform because to him it connoted the "spirit of utilitarianism" and also entailed secularization (because it eliminated letters from the "holy" Greek alphabet). Murav'ev wrote of Russia's roots in Orthodoxy, of the need for ceremony and ritual that Western rationalists ignore and urged fidelity to the Russian spirit. But not one of the contributors referred to Russia, in its present state, as exemplifying the good.

Summoning the intelligentsia to purge itself of alien ideologies (and of the "Russian specters" of revolution as well), they advocated the discovery and rediscovery of Christian ideals and values. Thus would Russia be resurrected, "a genuine resurrection, a rising up from the dead with a new soul." How this would change political reality was not clear. Murav'ev alluded to messengers and heralds of a new Russia, a "knightly Rus'," and spoke of great deeds. Berdiaev, noting the passivity with which Russians accepted Bolshevism, the lack of a great battle (Armageddon), explained that the time for battle was not yet ripe for the proper weapons had not yet been forged: Russians lacked the armor, the sword and shield, the knightly cast of mind. But the nature of this battle was not specified.

Searching for guidance in Russian history, the authors tended to focus on the Time of Troubles, when Church and people had united to drive out the alien invaders and forge the basis of a new Russia. Indeed, this period and the Assembly of the Land (*Zemskii Sobor*) that ended it and elected the new Romanov dynasty was a favorite of the Slavophiles. But what role was the Orthodox Church to play and what were the Christian principles that would rally the populace? What would constitute the "great cause of God and country" several contributors called for? They were not at all unanimous, encompassing several positions within their ranks. As in 1905-06, when Bulgakov had attempted to found a Christian political party, there was no unity on what political position a Christian must hold. Indeed, at the time, Bulgakov had been opposed by Prince Evgenii Trubetskoi, who argued that Christianity was a system of purely personal morality compatible with various political and social systems. Similarly, Izgoev, Kotliarevskii, and Novgorodtsev were fearful of too much religion in politics and spoke, in vague terms, of Christian principles, of the primacy of spiritual life and of respect for law. Pokrovskii, focusing on the latter, argued that even if all people were saints, even if all were motivated by one faith and one love (an allusion to Slavophilism), the practical needs of living together would require commonly accepted rules. Condemning the current extinction of law by pure force, he blamed it on the denigration of law by Russian intellectuals: socialists who dismissed law as the mere expression of class interest, anarchists who opposed law on principle, and idealists who insisted on absolute truth and goodness, would brook no compromise, and were indifferent to the practical aspects of life. Frank pointed to the weakness of the spiritual principle in all camps, including the conservatives, and advocated religion that united faith and life, struggled to improve

the world rather than fleeing from it. He urged the intelligentsia to deal with the concrete needs of the people in a spirit of humble service. Only Izgoev and Struve stressed the desperate economic realities most Russians then faced. In contrast to these relatively pragmatic writers, Askol'dov was a maximalist in his own way and, possibly influenced by Merezhkovskii, alluded to an imminent "Third Testament." Murav'ev referred to the traditional ideal of "Holy Russia" and stressed the "all-embracing" nature of Russian Orthodoxy, which he contrasted with the conquering nature of Roman Catholicism, its search for world domination. Russia, he said, needs a new idea, a "new truth," symbolized by Sophia, whose return he prophesied. The "refugee" in Bulgakov's colloquy believed that the transfiguration of the world will begin in Russia; several of the discussants looked to the Mother of God for national salvation.

In short there was no commonly held affirmative message of salvation. Bolshevism was evil, but what would replace it? Theocracy? But Orthodoxy itself was in a process of change. Whose version of Orthodoxy? The narrow obscurantists, whose ignoring of the problems of social justice and of life in this world had engendered the militant atheism of the Russian intelligentsia? Clearly none of the contributors championed what today would be called secular humanism. But what was the role of non-Christians or even non-Orthodox, in the vast Russian empire?

They also held diverse political and social views, as William Woehrlin notes in his introduction. Berdiaev, who was later known as the "red priest" in Paris, espoused a kind of Christian socialism, as did Bulgakov. Kotliarevskii and Izgoev favored a liberal constitutional order. Frank counselled moral and legal discipline, responsibility, labor, and advocated a collective unity of nation (people), state, and church that gave scope to popular aspirations. Struve regarded the nation as a spiritual unity; he has been accused of being a proto-fascist because of his emphasis on nationalism and a powerful state.

Conditions in Russia prevented wide dissemination of *Out of the Depths* at the time of its publication. By 1921 most copies had been confiscated and destroyed and by 1924 most of its contributors were no longer living in Russia. Like the diverse views of contemporary Soviet dissidents, whom it probably influenced, *Out of the Depths* offered no clear counterfaith to Bolshevism. As a force for change, its legacy is ambiguous. But as a historical document, its importance is clear. It offers a unique kind of testimony, that of witnesses to the Revolution, who make no claim to impartiality, and who were also prominent actors in the drama of prerevolutionary intellectual history whose self-appointed mission was to restore the religious principles of Russian life.

INTRODUCTION

Voices from Out of the Depths

I

The eleven men who wrote the essays contained in *Out of the Depths* were losers in the cauldron of revolutionary politics. Forcibly excluded from the intellectual life of Soviet Russia, they were indeed prophets without honor in their own troubled country. Most of them suffered the pain and frustration of political exile, and none of them had the satisfaction of seeing their ideas and theories serve their beloved homeland in any practical way.

Yet one cannot deny the prominent efforts and intellectual achievements of these authors. As a group, they represented some of the best minds and refined intellects of their generation. Educated variously in law, philosophy, philology, theology, political theory, and economics, they wrote extensively and, in different degrees, took part in politics and public life. Their publications in diverse fields, written in their homeland and later in emigration, in fact form a substantial part of Russia's late nineteenth- and twentieth-century cultural achievement.

Several of the authors also played a direct political role, although in that harsh arena of politics, where failure is quickly identified and punished, they proved to be tragic figures. Five of them (N. A. Berdiaev, S. N. Bulgakov, S. L. Frank, A. S. Izgoev, and P. B. Struve) had contributed to the early development of Russian Marxism and legal Marxism, thereby helping to popularize a movement which, in its aberrant form, they later condemned.¹ Two of them (S. N. Bulgakov and P. I. Novgorodtsev) had argued for alternatives to Marxism in the forms of Christian socialism and idealistic liberalism, but neither left significant trace.² The four authors who were directly involved in the political events of the Russian revolution, as activists in the Kadet party (A. S. Izgoev, S. A. Kotliarevskii, P. I. Novgorodtsev, and P. B. Struve), found that their longstanding criticism of Russia's moribund autocracy had contributed to a

1. For Struve's leading role in early Marxism, see Richard Pipes, *Struve: Liberal on the Left, 1870-1905* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Univ. Press, 1970), pp. 52-79. All writers are treated in Richard Kindersley, *The First Russian Revisionists* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1962).

2. For these efforts of Bulgakov and Novgorodtsev, see George F. Putman, *Russian Alternatives to Marxism: Christian Socialism and Idealistic Liberalism in Twentieth Century Russia* (Knoxville: Univ. of Tennessee Press, 1977).

revolutionary anarchy that threatened all the liberal political goals they once hoped to achieve.³

The authors of *Out of the Depths* are distinguished further by their self-acknowledged inclusion in the pre-revolutionary Russian "intelligentsia."⁴ The term "intelligentsia" was used so variously during the past century that its use here requires more specific definition. It is important, moreover, to recognize that the authors represented only a small segment of the intelligentsia, a segment that was rejected by the mainstream groups.

The term "intelligentsia" is used here, in a broad rather than a narrow sense, to describe all those Russian intellectuals who rose above either unconcern or narrow professionalism to pass negative judgment on Russian reality and to ask the burning questions—who is to blame? and what is to be done?—out of concern for Russia's national destiny. Within this definition, there is room for the many strands of thought and the many passions that contributed to the great debates between Westerners and Slavophiles, Populists and Marxists, and Socialists and Liberals. There is also room for the many positions in the ferocious disputes that arose within the intelligentsia early in the twentieth century, when the mainstream groups were challenged by those who questioned their basic philosophical, religious, and political assumptions.

Despite differences on many points of detail and strategy, most of those who criticized the established political and social order were likely to agree in a number of important ways. Members of this mainstream tended to be atheists, or at least opposed to the established Church, and they were probably philosophical materialists as well. They were strongly influenced by rationalistic ideologies, imported from the West and adapted to Russian conditions. Whether liberal or socialist, they sought liberation of the Russian people from the autocracy, and they looked with optimism toward some measure of popular government. Even on the question of the methods required to achieve change, prior to 1905, the gap had narrowed between avowed revolutionists and more moderate reformers, so that bitter political enemies within the intelligentsia could at least agree on the need of coercive action against the tsarist government. Finally there was a particular mood or style shared by most of the mainstream intelligentsia, a mood that introduced a large measure of dogmatic certainty and intolerant self-righteousness into the debates. The age-long repres-

3. Struve's activity in 1917-18 is described in Richard Pipes, *Struve: Liberal on the Right, 1905-1944* (Cambridge, Mass. Harvard Univ. Press, 1980), pp. 231-68. The work of all four men is noted in William G. Rosenberg, *Liberals in the Russian Revolution: The Constitutional Democratic Party 1917-1921* (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1974).

4. Thus, I take exception to the classification of the writers of *Signposts* as "self-styled ex-intelligently," found in Jeffrey Brooks, "Vekhi and the Vekhi Dispute," *Survey*, 86, No. 1 (1973), 21.

sion of reasonable and legitimate claims for freedom had bred a moral maximalism in the Russian intelligentsia and a tendency to stress ends over means. In extreme cases it also bred a tendency to consider ideas in a utilitarian fashion, placing action above understanding in a desperate attempt to bring about change.

During the first decade of the twentieth century, however, another tradition developed within the intelligentsia in opposition to these mainstream views. This alternate tradition, led by several of the authors of *Out of the Depths*, was clearly in the minority, but it produced more than its share of discussion and debate before it was rejected by the mainstream groups, along with charges that those who would challenge certain assumptions were somehow guilty of betrayal of the intelligentsia's sacred cause.

The first impetus to reconsideration of mainstream views came from a changing intellectual climate at the turn of the century. Throughout Europe, Positivism and philosophical materialism were criticized for their implied determinism and their theories of man that seemed an affront to human freedom and dignity. Moreover, in Russia, some towering figures, V. S. Solov'ev and F. M. Dostoevskii for example, had contributed to a renewed interest in idealistic philosophy and religion, ideas long out of favor with most of the intelligentsia.⁵ The new philosophical and religious questions that entered the debates of the first decade of this century have recently been catalogued and studied in great detail.⁶ Here it is enough to note that several of the authors of *Out of the Depths* were deeply involved in these discussions. Five of them (N. A. Berdiaev, S. N. Bulgakov, S. L. Frank, A. S. Izgoev, and P. B. Struve) were weaned from their earlier involvement with Marxism or radical politics in the process. More importantly, a somewhat different six (S. A. Askol'dov, N. A. Berdiaev, S. N. Bulgakov, S. L. Frank, P. B. Struve, and P. I. Novgorodtsev) were major contributors to the symposium *Problems of Idealism* in 1902, which linked the search for a new morality to an affirmation of the unconditional significance of the individual, and which argued forcefully for the necessary connection between idealism and religion.⁷ *Problems of Idealism*, under the editorship of P. I. Novgorodtsev, set the format and pattern for two symposia to follow—*Signposts* in 1909 and *Out of the Depths* in 1918—by related but not identical groups of authors. Taken together these three sym-

5. For the general revival of religious interest, see Nicholas Zernov, *The Russian Religious Renaissance of the Twentieth Century* (New York: Harper and Row, 1963). For a study of the impact of new philosophical and religious ideas on one of the leading writers of the time, see Bernice Glatzer Rosenthal, *Dmitri Sergeevich Merezhkovsky and the Silver Age: The Development of a Revolutionary Mentality* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1975).

6. Christopher Read, *Religion, Revolution and the Russian Intelligentsia, 1900-1912: The Vekhi Debate and Its Intellectual Background* (Totowa, N.J.: Barnes and Noble, 1979).

7. *Ibid.*, pp. 15-16.

posia, with minor variations, are part of a single religious and philosophical inspiration—the minority voice in the intelligentsia in opposition to the mainstream.

The revolution of 1905 altered the situation of all persons concerned with Russian intellectual and public life and thereby became the second impetus to reconsideration of the views of the intelligentsia. The achievements of the revolution fell far short of the expectations of liberal reformers and revolutionaries alike, but, after 1905, new conditions prevailed for more open expression of ideas and for at least some positive parliamentary action in the newly established Duma. Moreover, the revolution caused some members of the intelligentsia to confront the consequences of their criticism, when they realized that the violence of 1905 clearly went beyond the ability of intellectual leaders to control, and they calculated that there might be just as much to fear from anarchic violence as from oppression. Under these new conditions, and with these somber reflections about the consequences of revolution in mind, M. O. Gershenzon edited the second of the symposia, *Signposts*, in 1909, as a passionate appeal to the intelligentsia to reconsider its basic assumptions and tactics.⁸

Except for M. O. Gershenzon, who from the beginning differed from the other authors, and who later had a falling out with them, the remaining six authors of *Signposts* took part in either one or both of the other two symposia. B. A. Kistiakovskii had written in *Problems of Idealism*, A. S. Izgoev was to write for *Out of the Depths*; while N. A. Berdiaev, S. N. Bulgakov, S. L. Frank, and P. B. Struve contributed to all three.

Signposts provoked a lively response within the intelligentsia, but it was a disappointing response for the authors. They had sought to raise fundamental questions about the motives, rationalizations, and tactics of the self-appointed intellectual leaders of the people. Yet from positions as far apart as P. N. Miliukov and V. I. Lenin the general response was one of rejection, and it was often rejection out of hand, without serious consideration of the authors' arguments. At its worst the response sank to the level of mindless name calling.⁹

Considering themselves part of the intelligentsia, the authors of *Problems of Idealism* and *Signposts*, and the few who supported them, had criticized the mainstream tradition and had tried to redirect its thoughts and actions. Because of the prominence and talents of these authors, their writings were

8. This work is available in two English translations. See Marshall S. Shatz and Judith E. Zimmerman, trans. and eds., *Signposts: A Collection of Articles on the Russian Intelligentsia* (Irvine, Calif.: Charles Schlacks Jr., Publisher, 1986); and Boris Shragin and Albert Todd, eds., Marian Schwartz, trans., *Landmarks: A Collection of Articles on the Russian Intelligentsia* (New York: Karz-Howard, 1977).

9. For an excellent summary of the attacks made on *Signposts* by those who defended the revolutionary tradition, see Read, *Religion, Revolution and the Russian Intelligentsia*, pp. 141-61.

circulated and became a permanent part of the Russian intellectual tradition. But, as P. I. Novgorodtsev later wrote, the intelligentsia in effect said it had “nothing to reconsider and nothing to change.” Those wanting a significant change in the intelligentsia remained a very small minority, and it took a great war and yet another revolution before they could even hope that their warnings would be heeded.

II

The immediate context for the writing of *Out of the Depths* was one of violent revolution and incipient civil war. This time Struve took the initiative, and in the spring of 1918 invited ten like-minded contributors to join him in a symposium of essays on the Russian revolution. Like Gershenzon, the editor of *Signposts*, Struve apparently made no effort to assign topics or coordinate the responses; the essays were to be published as they were submitted.¹⁰ To the seven authors who had written in *Signposts*, six new names were now added—S. A. Askol'dov, V. I. Ivanov, S. A. Kotliarevskii, V. N. Murav'ev, P. I. Novgorodtsev, and A. I. Pokrovskii—and two were dropped—M. O. Gershenzon and B. A. Kistiakovskii.

By the time Struve's invitation went out, the Russian revolution was a year or more old, and for the contributors to *Out of the Depths* that year must have been an unrelenting nightmare of frustration and betrayal. They had witnessed more than enough to confirm their very worst fears. A corrupt, anachronistic government had led an unprepared nation into an unnecessary war that brought only suffering and defeat. The revolution unleashed elemental forces of anger and disorder, causing revolutionary leaders either to ride the whirlwind of anarchy, or be destroyed by actions they could not control. Intellectuals must always be shocked when words explode into deeds, and when reality is no longer a concept, but a scream and a gunshot. Now, suddenly, all the decades of comfortable theorizing about the intelligentsia's relationship to the people, and its mission to lead them, appeared irrelevant. The greatest amount of blood had yet to be shed in the Civil War, but, by the spring and summer of 1918, the authors of *Out of the Depths* had already seen enough violence to bring them to a level of awareness of the consequences of popular action unknown to their counterparts in earlier generations.

The first year of revolution brought frustration and despair in the political arena as well. Standing closest as a group to the Kadet party, the contributors to *Out of the Depths* had seen their cherished institutions and political values serve as little more than a brief stopping place in the movement of the revolu-

10. P. B. Struve in “Publisher's Preface” to *Out of the Depths*, see below, p. xli; S. L. Frank, *Biografiia P. B. Struve* (New York: Chekhov Publishing House, 1956), pp. 120-21.

tion from tsardom to the extreme left. In that process, the legal procedures they believed in had been replaced by coercion and, increasingly, by terror. They saw popular sovereignty give way to class warfare and finally to the imposition of a dictatorship in the name of the proletariat. Those of the writers who were political activists felt the imposition of censorship and direct persecution; for all of them the revolution seemed to have lost all its beneficial possibilities. Not only could a revolutionary state repeat all the excesses of the old regime, but a real possibility existed that society itself might degenerate into a desperate struggle of all against all.

Along with these threats to culture and society, the contributors to *Out of the Depths* were aware that Russian nationhood was seriously at risk. Their essays were written between the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, ending Russia's war with Germany in March, and the sudden collapse of the German war effort in the west, the following November. Territories and peoples of great value to the old empire had been sacrificed to buy time for the young Soviet state. German power could not be resisted; nor were there signs that it soon would falter. Furthermore, the collapse of the monarchy encouraged movements of national self-determination in parts of the old empire, movements that were gathering momentum throughout 1918. Finally, on the basis of the limited information they had, the authors understandably judged the Bolsheviks to be not only a cultural threat and a ruthless dictatorial political force, but also an anti-national group that had, in effect, sold out Russia for some highly suspect theories of internationalism.

Indeed, the times were dark, and no one could predict the outcome. Russia might remain under German domination and influence; the nation might literally burst asunder into its component parts; it might dissolve into the barbarities of full civil war. At the time, it probably seemed unlikely that the Bolsheviks could maintain dictatorial power, but from that babble of contending parties what new authority would take their place? And if it came to full civil war, would it ever be possible to restore even the minimal trust and civility needed to sustain national life? Facing these cruel alternatives, it is little wonder that the authors of *Out of the Depths* felt themselves, their nation, and their culture to be *in extremis*. Conscious of some sort of impending death, several of them were tempted to write with extravagant use of apocalyptic imagery, and all of them presented their arguments with a desperate sense of urgency, for it seemed like the last chance.

It would be wrong to paint a totally dark picture of the months during which *Out of the Depths* was written. In the spring of 1918, Struve could still concern himself with the publication of the liberal journal *Russian Thought*, and, of course, the authors of *Out of the Depths* wrote with the expectation that their essays would be circulated and would have some influence on the

course of events.¹¹ In June, Bulgakov finally completed his long pilgrimage through secular ideologies and scientific studies to return to the Church. He was ordained and, for all the turmoil and danger of the times, it was still possible to follow the service with a "friendly tea party" with friends who happened to be in Moscow, including at least five who had taken part in one of the two earlier symposia. Though the context for the writing of *Out of the Depths* tilted strongly toward disaster, there were yet a few moments of what Bulgakov called "indescribable joy."¹² Significantly, those fleeting moments were spent in close communion with the Church.

III

As if in mockery of the passion that went into the composition of *Out of the Depths*, we know from Frank's biography of Struve that the initial publication of the symposium was stillborn.¹³ The essays themselves were composed between April and July of 1918, except for the essay by the editor, Struve, which was added in August.¹⁴ But, by fall, when the printing was completed, a new and dangerous situation prevailed. The confused pattern of terror and tolerance seen earlier in the year had given way to the openly proclaimed Red Terror. Fanny (Dora) Kaplan had made her attempt on the life of Lenin, and the Civil War was in full swing. Under those conditions, no one could think seriously of trying to circulate a religiously inspired, blatantly anti-Bolshevik book in Moscow. The first edition was virtually buried in storage at the printers for two and a half years. In the meantime, the authors scattered, some into exile or active opposition to the Bolshevik state, others into obscurity, hoping to ride out the storm.

Frank heard second hand of the attempt to circulate the books in March, 1921, at the time of the Kronstadt sailors revolt.¹⁵ It appears that the typesetters at the Kushnarev Press tried on their own initiative to put the books on sale. Distributed by hand, the volumes did not even reach the Moscow bookstores, nor did circulation reach beyond Moscow. There is no way of knowing how many of these books circulated before the remainder was confiscated and destroyed. The number was undoubtedly very small. It was pro-

11. Frank, *Biografiia*, pp. 120-21. The last issue of *Russian Thought* to appear in Russia was May/June, 1918. It included part of the essay by Berdiaev found in this symposium.

12. From Bulgakov's "Autobiographical Notes" in Sergius Bulgakov, *A Bulgakov Anthology*, James Pain and Nicolas Zernov, eds. (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1976), p. 8.

13. Frank, *Biografiia*, pp. 120-22. Frank's account is the basis for N. Poltoratskii's essay "Sbornik *Iz glubiny* i ego znachenie," in *Iz glubiny*, 2nd ed. (Paris: YMCA Press, 1967), pp. ix-x.

14. Pipes puts the date of writing earlier, in the second half of July. See Pipes, *Struve: Liberal on the Right*, p. 257.

15. Frank, *Biografiia*, p. 121.

scribed in the Soviet Union, and, until well after World War II, only two copies were known to exist anywhere else. One was in the personal library of Berdiaev, who brought it out when he emigrated. The other, surprisingly, was sent by the Soviet book agency, "Kniga," to professor B. B. Bekker of Amsterdam University, in response to a simple book order in the early 1930s.¹⁶

Over the years, fragments of *Out of the Depths* did reach a wider audience. Berdiaev's essay, "Specters of the Russian Revolution," had been printed in the final issue of *Russian Thought* in May/June 1918. A few years later, in 1921, a Russian-Bulgarian publishing house in Sofia put out a separate brochure of Bulgakov's, "At the Feast of the Gods," and a revised version of Struve's essay, "The Historical Meaning of the Russian Revolution."¹⁷ After World War II, part of Berdiaev's essay appeared in a publication of the Russian Student Christian Movement in Paris, in 1959, and the entire essay was reprinted in an emigré journal in New York in 1965.¹⁸

On the whole, however, until quite recent times, very little attention was paid to *Out of the Depths*, and it had virtually no impact on either emigré or Western scholarship. Not that all of the ideas it contained were ignored in studies of Russian thought, but scholars turned to the better known and more readily available *Signposts* for examples of those points of view. The later development of those ideas, or additions to them that might have been inspired by the harsh experience of World War I and the Russian revolution, received little or no attention. The studies of Russian thought by T. G. Masaryk and N. O. Lossky, for example, concentrate only on the earlier *Signposts*.¹⁹ Even V. V. Zenkovskii, whose major study of Russian philosophy gives significant attention to five of the contributors, makes no reference to *Out of the Depths* at all.²⁰ Nicholas Zernov was more generous in his study of the twentieth-century religious renaissance in Russia, calling *Out of the Depths* a "remarkable document." But he devoted no more than three brief pages to it, and made no serious attempt to analyze its content.²¹

The problem scholars had in simply finding a copy of *Out of the Depths* ended in 1967, when the Y.M.C.A. Press in Paris published a second edition, with introductory essays by Nikita Struve and N. Poltoratskii. This handsome

16. *Ibid.*

17. *Iz glubiny*, 2nd ed. (1967), p. 331.

18. The selection appeared in the *Vestnik Russkogo studentcheskogo khristianskogo dvizheniia*, No. 53 (1959), and the entire essay was reprinted in *Novyi zhurnal*, No. 79 (1965).

19. T. G. Masaryk, *The Spirit of Russia*, 2nd ed., 2 vols. (New York: Macmillan, 1955); N. O. Lossky, *History of Russian Philosophy* (New York: International Universities Press, 1951).

20. V. V. Zenkovsky, *A History of Russian Philosophy*, George L. Kline, trans., 2 vols. (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1953).

21. Zernov, *The Russian Religious Renaissance*, pp. 207-09.

edition, which included photographs of most of the contributors, was printed without changes from the original version, except for being reset in modern type and orthography. With this publication, major libraries, specialized scholars, and readers in the emigré community at last had easier access to copies of the work. What kind of circulation the second edition may have had in the Soviet Union, once again, is impossible to measure.

It cannot be said that the republication of *Out of the Depths* made a very great impression. An emigré Russian language review alone heralded its appearance.²² The second edition of the symposium was relatively small (1,500 copies),²³ and the major journals of Russian studies in the West were no more concerned to review it than their counterparts in the Soviet Union. Although new discussions of *Signposts* were now more likely to contain at least some reference to the later symposium, it appeared that the second edition of *Out of the Depths* might receive little more attention than the first.

Developments within the dissident community in the Soviet Union determined otherwise. As positions have formed there, among the intellectuals who find themselves alienated to some degree from the official ideology, it is possible to identify points of view closely related to the ideas expressed in *Out of the Depths*.²⁴ It may be difficult to establish clear lines of influence and connection, but it is now possible to see the long-neglected symposium as part of a vital, ongoing debate. The most direct evidence of current relevance, of course, came in 1974, with the publication of *From Under the Rubble* by A. I. Solzhenitsyn and six other dissidents in the Soviet Union. In this modern symposium, obviously modeled on the three earlier ones we have been discussing, there is specific reference by one of the authors to *Out of the Depths*, and, in his forward, Solzhenitsyn himself uses the words "from out of those dank and dark depths," as an expression that can be equated to "from under the rubble."²⁵ Max Hayward, in his introduction to the English edition, even suggests that the Russian title, *Iz pod glub* (From under the Rubble), is a "phonic echo" of the title *Iz glubiny* (Out of the Depths).²⁶

One would like to think that, in time, scholars of Russian intellectual history would have given *Out of the Depths* its due, regardless of developments among present-day Soviet dissidents. But, now that its ideas are once again in active discussion, that attention seems assured.

22. Nicolas Zernov, "Iz glubiny," *Novyi zhurnal*, No. 88 (1967), pp. 239-50.

23. Nikita Struve, of the YMCA Press in Paris, kindly supplied me with this information.

24. See Dimitry Pospelovsky, "A Comparative Enquiry into Neo-Slavophilism and its Antecedents in the Russian History of Ideas," *Soviet Studies*, 31, No. 3 (July 1979), 319-42.

25. Alexander Solzhenitsyn et al., *From Under the Rubble*, A. M. Brock et al., trans., intro. by Max Hayward (Boston: Little, Brown, 1975), pp. x, 161.

26. *Ibid.*, p. vii.

IV

Any discussion of the content of *Out of the Depths* must begin with the brief editor's forward to the symposium, in which Struve noted that the authors were persons of different temperaments and views, formed into a group only by their experience of a "single torment" and their adherence to a "single faith." The "torment" was the moral and political catastrophe that had overtaken Russia in 1917, and the "faith" was the belief that a deep religious consciousness formed an essential basis for the life of any society.²⁷ It will be useful to build on this statement of similarities and differences among the authors to characterize the whole collection.

Of the many points of similarity among the authors, perhaps none was more obvious or more significant than the degree to which they generally conformed to the pattern of discourse that had developed in the intelligentsia during the preceding century. The catastrophe they experienced may have been unprecedented and devastating in its dramatic impact, yet as a group they could not escape the "cursed questions" that had plagued so many generations of Russian intellectuals. It was easier to define one's views by offering different answers to questions already posed and answered by opponents, than to suggest that the questions themselves were wrong, or perhaps, inappropriate to the situation. Thus, throughout these pages, we find not only practical, traditional questions (Who is to blame? and What is to be done?), but also the very impractical and speculative, traditional questions (What is Russia's destiny—East or West? What are the unique characteristics of the Russian national genius? and What is Russia's destiny or mission in universal history?).

Although the pages of *Out of the Depths* contain references to political parties and to the categories of modern social analysis, there was widespread agreement among the authors that Russian society, perhaps uniquely, could be understood in terms of a polarity between the people (the *narod*) and the intelligentsia. The people represented the great elemental force in Russian history. This force could display sublime, uncomplicated spirituality; it could exhibit heroic feats of endurance; or it could explode in fury with irresistible power. Probing the essential character of the people, each author arrived at his own portrait. But, as a group, they seemed to share a condescending view of the people's ability to act sensibly on its own behalf. The fate of the child-like people, the realization of its potential for good or evil, depended on the behavior of the intelligentsia, which acted as teacher, guide, and conscience for the greater mass. In what manner, and how well, the intelligentsia performed these tasks were questions that ran throughout the essays. The authors analyzed

27. See below, p. xli.

what the intelligentsia had taught the people, and they asked further questions about the source of the intelligentsia's ideas and the consequences of the infusion of these ideas into the masses. And the answers given to these questions included the most severe condemnations. The intelligentsia seemed to have failed at every turn. Its members were seriously rebuked for behaving like members of an intolerant, secular church, refusing any critical self-examination and closing their minds to different points of view, or even to the experience of reality. The members of the intelligentsia were said to have moralized incessantly, and yet to have made morality itself relative to their own arbitrarily chosen values. They were guilty of mindless maximalism and a renegade attitude toward all authority, except their own; they were guilty of rationalistic utopianism, not recognizing the organic links necessary for any human society; and they had, by their own apostasy, undermined the people's most precious gift, its religious faith. This list could go on in similar fashion, but it is more important to notice that when the authors of *Out of the Depths* tried to find some hope that could raise them out of despair, they looked once again to the very group they had maligned. The intelligentsia, they argued, must experience a rebirth in a new spirit, to become worthy of its traditional mission of leading the people. Indeed it was to encourage that rebirth that the symposium itself was written.

Closely related to this reliance on the intelligentsia to lead the people, was the "idealistic" interpretation of history that dominates the symposium. With the exception of parts of the essays by Struve and Izgoev, the authors seem to share the view that the motor force for the movement of history is what people believe—both the elite and the masses. The struggle for Russia's survival, or for the fulfillment of its historic mission, therefore, is a struggle of ideas, that is, a struggle to determine the understandings and spirit that will prevail in the nation. That late Imperial Russia was a land beset with the social problems of rapid industrialization, and with resulting conflicts of interest that would surely influence points of view, was hardly noticed. If class conflict was mentioned at all, the assumption was that, with proper understanding, it could be contained or subsumed into some higher ideal. Certainly it is no cause for wonder that one group of writers in the Russian intellectual tradition would make its final appeal to human thought. One can also appreciate the authors' clear assertions that ideas have consequences in human actions, and are not absolutely determined by circumstances. But it is the *extent* of their commitment to this point of view that is so striking. Generally phrasing their analyses and prescriptions in thoroughly idealistic terms, most of the authors avoided any careful or detailed study of the social and economic circumstances that surrounded them.

Seen as a limitation in one regard, their prevailing idealistic view of history was an opportunity in another. It was an opportunity to find some way out of Russia's predicament. To explain Russia's misfortunes by errors of human

choice in the past, was to imply that those choices had in no way been determined or necessary, and that they could be corrected, as a matter of free choice in the future. Thus even Struve, whose essay most nearly conforms to a scholarly, historical analysis of Russia's situation, comes down finally to an appreciation of the power of ideas, when he challenges the intelligentsia to embrace a new "idea-passion" that would unify the nation and give it direction.

As a group, the authors also displayed a limited understanding of the nationality question. Except for Novgorodtsev's essay, the symposium contains very little recognition of the fact that the Russian Empire of that time was made up of many peoples, languages, and traditions. Understandably the authors wanted to speak to the traditions of the dominant group, and, of course, they had no idea what would comprise the nation in the very near future. From the perspective of the middle of 1918, their worst anticipation might have been a drastically reduced Great Russian state. But the suspicion remains that, as a group desperately seeking values to affirm, they were temporarily blinded to a problem of great importance and simply omitted it from their immediate concern. The authors themselves may have taken great comfort in the broad, all-encompassing character of Orthodoxy, and may have looked to its unifying power as the best hope to bring together the disjointed parts of the Russian state; but what of the sects and the other Christian churches represented in the state? How would Muslims and Jews fit into a state that had experienced a Christian resurrection?

Finally, along with other similarities, one ought to list the temptation that threatened all of the writers who viewed the world from a Christian perspective, and who tended to view political error as a form of apostasy and sin. There is a trick of logic buried deeply within the Christian understanding of sin and redemption, and to the degree that the authors committed themselves to that doctrine, they were led to grandiose concepts of Russia's mission almost despite themselves. An individual and a people are most ennobled and closest to God when they find salvation in divine grace. Massive sin, and its accompanying suffering, may make persons more receptive to this ennobling grace, even though they in no sense deserve it. Quite apart from the dull routine of simply living decently, great sin and suffering—words that the authors used to describe Russia's condition in 1918—thus become an avenue to great redemption, with all of its advantages and its implication that those who have gone through this cycle are better than those who have not. One must hesitate before placing too great emphasis on this point; it is impressionistic and difficult to document. But the pages of *Out of the Depths* contain more than a few examples of the kind of religious thinking that moves with breathtaking speed from despair at Russia's sins and suffering to the possibility and advantage of God's salvation, with its implication that Russia has a special mission in world history.

V

Awareness of many similarities among the authors should not obscure some very significant differences. The authors were, as Struve claimed, persons of different temperaments and views, and even if the symposium taken as a whole offered a challenge to the mainstream intelligentsia, it still contained varied and contradictory elements.

One is first struck by variations in style. The authors were all experienced writers and words came easily to them. Indeed, one of the appeals of the symposium is its dramatic quality, created by powerful images and telling turns of phrase. Yet how differently the authors went about their tasks! At one extreme, the opening essay of Askol'dov mixes his analysis of the reality of the Russian revolution with a convoluted exploration of the Russian soul, and apocalyptic visions that are truly not of this world. At the other extreme, Struve attempts a hard-headed historical explanation of how Russia's present misfortunes came to be. Another polarity may be seen in the pointedness and intensity of the writing. In the manner of *Signposts*, Novgorodtsev sustains a relentless and unforgiving attack on the errors and pretenses of the mainstream intelligentsia. By way of contrast, Bulgakov's essay in the form of a colloquy explores several anti-Bolshevik points of view in contest with each other. Within that framework, he achieves a detachment and humane fairness that at times makes it difficult for the reader to identify Bulgakov's own position. Even the general preoccupation of the symposium with the present is challenged to some degree by Berdiaev's attempt to find previsions of the revolution in the great writers of Russia's literary past. And, finally, one hardly knows how to place the essay of Ivanov in the rest of the symposium. While the other authors gathered forces for Armageddon, Ivanov took the occasion to write an impassioned hymn of praise to the celestial glories of the Russian language and to pour scorn on Soviet orthographic reforms.

The question of Russia's national identity had traditionally been linked to an evaluation of the West, as either a model for the future, or as a tragic example to be condemned and avoided. In effect, *both* of these positions were expressed on the pages of *Out of the Depths*. The authors agreed on the dangerous consequences of the intelligentsia's living in a world of thought totally foreign to Russian reality and the Russian people, but, as a group, they could not agree to return to a Slavophile insistence that Russia's path be defined narrowly, or that it be defined in a way that was totally unique. While several of the authors argued that the intelligentsia's tendency toward abstract intellectualism had indeed been a foreign import, others argued that the problem arose because the intelligentsia foolishly took the worst, rather than the best, the West had to offer. While insisting that cultural borrowing required careful selectivity, these authors believed the West still contained much from which

Russia might learn. An example of this difference of approach may be found in the two solutions the separate authors gave to the problem of restraining violence and conflicts of interest within Russian society. On one hand there is an appeal and a yearning for a unique spiritual unity, which only an Orthodox people living in Christ could achieve. On the other hand, there is a call for Western models of institutional restraint, which could serve as protection against the leanings of the Russian people toward reckless extremism. Thus, a healthy respect for lawful procedure, as known in the West, was contrasted to the behavior of Russian zealots, who, as members of the Black Hundreds or the "Red Hundreds," initiated endless cycles of repression and violence because they believed themselves to be acting in a righteous cause. Clearly the inspiration for this line of thought differed from that which claimed the Russian people had a unique genius for spiritual unity. In the midst of some statements in Bulgakov's colloquy that reflect neo-Slavophilism, one finds an unexpected and only partly facetious expression of the lingering respect for the West, when one of the characters insists that the Russians may well profit from a period of German domination, by learning order and discipline.

The authors of *Out of the Depths* could not comment on the contemporary condition of Russia, or its recent past, without revealing their own standards or ideals for the good society. Here again differences and contradictions may be seen. It goes without saying that they all longed for an end to the violence and coercion that characterized their times, and as a group they sought to save their beloved homeland from what appeared to be imminent death, and, if possible, to restore it to some kind of greatness. They also shared an understanding that a nation, or a society, could not function on a purely mechanistic model. It was more than the sum of its parts, more than the individuals, the resources, and the institutional arrangements that composed it. The mechanistic view of society had been embraced by most of the intelligentsia, and it had led to Russia's downfall. The authors of *Out of the Depths* preferred to view the nation, or the society, as an organism, animated and directed by some kind of spirit that subordinated the parts to the greater whole and provided vital connections among them. But they did not agree on the nature of that spirit, and in different essays they offered suggestions that were *both* religious and secular. At one extreme Askol'dov was worried about whether the holy principle of the Russian soul would triumph over the humanistic and bestial principles. Were the proper spiritual attitude to prevail, institutional arrangements in society scarcely seemed to matter at all. At the other extreme, Struve called Russian youth to rally around the frankly secular cause of patriotism and Russia's national greatness. In other essays between these extremes, one finds different doses of holiness or normative liberal values given as the prescription needed to cure Russia's illness.

A broad range of opinions can also be seen in the authors' evaluations of socialism, although this case is complicated by confusion in the use of labels.

The term Bolshevism is unambiguous, and, when identified, that movement received the harshest condemnation for its part in the lies, betrayal, violence, and terror that characterized the revolution. Only a recognition that the Bolsheviks acted realistically to achieve their own ends, in contrast to the usual muddle-minded Russian intellectuals, tempered this judgment in a few cases. The term socialism, used alone, included the many varieties of Russian and European movements, as well as the general, abstract concept of community ownership or use. Allowing for the ambiguity that arises from different usage, one can still find assertions about socialism in *Out of the Depths* that say very different things. In one essay socialism is condemned out of hand, as flawed in its basic concept, with Bolshevism as its logical extension. Elsewhere, such total rejection is softened, and the creative and constructive role of socialism is admitted, when it is conditioned by the institutions and legal arrangements of Western nations. The religious critique of socialism added another whole dimension to this variety. Berdiaev condemned socialism, not because of any concern with bourgeois property rights, but because he sensed the power of socialism's humanistic appeal, which led to attempts to construct a better world, without God. He feared that such a world, in time, would become an affront to human dignity and freedom. Finally, Askol'dov and Struve, the two writers who longed for either a religious or a secular spirit to revitalize the nation, both subordinated any criticism of socialism itself to the question of what spirit motivated the entire society. In contrast with each other, these separate judgments on the broad concept of socialism show more variation and tolerance than statements made about the autocracy and the "visible" institutional Church of the old regime. Both of these were more uniformly condemned.

In the short run, the essays of *Out of the Depths* never reached their intended audience. If they had, and if any members of the intelligentsia had tried to respond to the authors' appeals, they would have faced one more unresolved contradiction at the very core of the symposium. A strong current of political romanticism, influenced by Slavophile ideas about the religiously inspired, organic unity of the people, mixed uneasily with analyses and prescriptions that were clearly influenced by Western rationalism. At the root of the contradiction was a difference in *degree* to which the authors allowed shared religious faith to impinge on their essays. In any case, the intelligentsia were variously accused of being both too rational and not rational enough.

VI

No simple characterization or label will suit the rich variety of thought and expression found in *Out of the Depths*. Profoundly troubled by the disasters of their times, and raising their voices to the same Lord of salvation, the authors produced a set of criticisms of the mainstream intelligentsia and a set of

prescriptions for Russia's future, rather than a uniform ideology of their own. In so doing, they built upon earlier attempts to redirect the majority of the intelligentsia from a path that a small minority believed would lead to disaster. The authors could restate and develop those earlier attempts with a new passion and with new insights gained from the actual experience of revolution. Their efforts were one of the last attempts to keep alive several aspects of Russia's old intellectual tradition in the new Soviet context, which became increasingly intolerant and restrictive. *Out of the Depths* thus has the strongest claim on our attention as a part of Russian intellectual history. The symposium was part of a tradition that failed to influence the course of events, but that tradition was at least an option in its own time, and it did express ideas that lay claim to universal significance. From those perspectives alone, the symposium deserves to be preserved and understood.

In its own way, *Out of the Depths* is also an important document of the Russian revolution. Victory in that revolution went either to those pragmatists who could ride the whirlwind of popular violence, or to those men of action who could manipulate ideology to simplify the bewildering complexities and ambiguities of reality so that they might act decisively. The authors of the symposium were of neither type, and yet they were an important part of the revolution which they described and which our later generation wants to understand. The authors represented a narrow cultural elite; they saw the revolution from a very limited perspective. And their essays paid little attention to the actual occurrences of the revolution. Yet their essays provide a powerful piece of impressionistic evidence as to what those times were like for their own group. Their statements cannot be accepted as a picture of the whole revolution, but they do show the responses of intellectuals to a rapidly changing situation, indeed, to the collapse of one world and the birth of another. The moving, personal statements of these intellectuals give today's reader a strong sense of direct contact with the past.

It is difficult to think of *Out of the Depths* ever having direct influence in the Soviet Union. Apart from the question of the book's availability, there is the enormous distance that separates the idiom and the assumptions of the authors from Soviet reality. But there is a growing conviction, both inside and outside the Soviet Union, that the blatant, intolerant ideology of established authority has lost much of its credibility. Of course, there will be attempts to revitalize that ideology from within, just as there will be appeals to a truly cosmopolitan, scientific humanism to find an alternative. Perhaps one of these attempts will succeed. But it seems likely, in any case, that creative thinkers in the Soviet Union will find it necessary to explore once again some of their own long-neglected national traditions, to find new points of departure. So many of the superb achievements of earlier Russian art, literature, and thought were inspired by ideas similar to those that produced *Out of the Depths*, that

it is difficult to think of those ideas being neglected entirely by anyone seeking to construct a credible national philosophy.

If that attempt takes place, those of us outside the Soviet Union can only observe and try to understand. To aid that understanding, this translation of the last major work by the religiously committed minority of the old Russian intelligentsia is offered.

William F. Woehrlin
Carleton College
1 September 1982

TRANSLATOR'S NOTE

A line by line comparison between the first edition (1918) and the second edition (1967) of *Out of the Depths* revealed several errors made when the text was reset in modern orthography. Some spelling errors changed meanings, some words and phrases were left out, and a couple of printed lines were out of order. These errors have been corrected in this edition.

The authors' footnotes from the Russian editions appear in this translation along with my own notes at the bottom of the pages. The glossary at the end of the book identifies lesser known historical figures, terms, and a few untranslated words. I have left foreign words and phrases in the text to show what the authors expected from their readers. Several literary characters have been identified, in cases where the qualities of these characters are important for an understanding of the text.

My understanding of translation can only be expressed in words that sound a little too pious, and, in any case, can never be entirely fulfilled. The authors wrote in styles that differed greatly in Russian, and they should not be homogenized in an English translation. Askol'dov's tortuous constructions should be distinguished from the elegant clarity of Berdiaev, and surely, in any language, Ivanov deserves a category of his own. Thus my goal has been to render a translation that is as close to the original as possible—and still be readable in English.

The few dates appearing in the text have been left in the Old Style (that is, thirteen days behind the Western calendar), used by the authors in the original Russian edition. I have transliterated Russian names and terms according to the modified Library of Congress system, omitting the hard sign and using the better-known German spelling for Herzen.

From the many credits that could be given, I would like to mention the help of Diane Nemec-Ignashev and Sergei Ignashev, who saved me from more errors than I care to admit. Alan Brooks made the comparison of the two Russian editions.

W.F.W.

THE AUTHORS

ASKOL'DOV, SERGEI ALEKSEEVICH (pseudonym of S. A. Alekseevich, 1870-1945), was the son of the Russian philosopher A. A. Kozlov, who greatly influenced his intellectual development. Trained originally in science at St. Petersburg University, Askol'dov worked for some time as a chemist in the Department of Customs and Excise. At age forty he devoted himself full time to philosophy and in 1914 received his M.A. at Moscow University for his dissertation *Thought and Reality*. With the Bolshevik revolution, he could not pursue his academic career. In the 1920s he founded a secret religious and philosophical society which in 1926 was named "The Brotherhood of St. Serafim of Sarov." Two years later Askol'dov and other members were arrested and exiled to the northern Urals, where he lived in harsh conditions until 1935 when he was allowed to return to Novgorod. During World War II, he went to Germany and resumed publishing with a *Critique of Dialectical Materialism*. He died in Berlin in 1945.

BERDIAEV, NIKOLAI ALEKSANDROVICH (1874-1948), was born into a distinguished family of landed gentry in the area of Kiev. His early interest in philosophy led him to break a family military tradition and enter Kiev University. As a student, his involvement with Marxism led to his expulsion and exile. By the early 1900s his concern for human freedom had caused his turning from Marxism to philosophic idealism and soon after to religion. In the years 1904 to 1908, he lived in St. Petersburg and took active part in the cultural and religious renaissance of the time in association with D. S. Merezhkovskii and his wife Zinaida Hippus. In 1908, he broke with their group and relocated in Moscow. A prolific author, he continued to write on philosophy, religion, and Russian intellectual life. With the Bolshevik victory, although sometimes in trouble with the new authorities, he taught at the Moscow University and even founded an Academy of Spiritual Culture. Expelled from the Soviet Union in 1922, he went on to a brilliant international career, representing a somewhat unorthodox Orthodoxy and never losing sympathy for the humane aspects of socialism, nor overcoming his dislike of many aspects of the bourgeois world.

BULGAKOV, SERGEI NIKOLAEVICH (1871-1944), was born into a clerical family and was given his earliest education in Church schools, only to lose faith and become a Marxist political economist. From a position of legal Marxism

in the 1890s, he made his way back to Christianity through neo-Kantianism in the 1900s. After 1905, he tried to develop a position of Christian socialism, but was elected to the second Duma in close affiliation with the Kadets. He continued work in political economy, defending a doctoral dissertation in 1912 and receiving a professorship in 1917. Soon after, Bulgakov was ordained a priest and although he was allowed to teach from 1919 to 1923 at Simferopol University in the Crimea, he was then expelled from the country. After two years in Prague, he became Professor of Theology and Dean of the Russian Orthodox Theological Institute in Paris, where he also participated in the Russian Student Christian Movement.

IVANOV, VIACHESLAV IVANOVICH (1866-1949), was born in Moscow in 1866 in the family of a minor civil servant. He studied history and philology at Moscow University and Berlin, with specialized interest in Greece and Rome. After extensive travels, he settled in St. Petersburg from 1905 to 1912, where his home became an important gathering place for artists, poets, and intellectuals. Soon recognized as Russia's leading symbolist poet, he continued his classical scholarship and took part in the St. Petersburg Religious Philosophical Society. As a proud defender of traditional cultural values, he was allowed only minor academic posts after the revolution, including a professorship of Greek at the University of Azerbaidjan in Baku in 1921. In uneasy cooperation with the Soviet educational establishment, he was sent on a mission to Italy in 1924, and he never returned. In Italy he continued his literary and scholarly work and produced the Russian translation of Dante.

IZGOEV, ALEKSANDR SOLOMONOVICH (pseudonym of A. S. Lande, 1872-1935), was born into a Jewish family whose faith he later abandoned. He attended the universities at Novorossiisk and Tomsk. After involvement with legal Marxism in the 1890s, his views evolved toward the right and he joined the Kadets, becoming a member of their Central Committee in 1906. In the period before 1917 he was most prominent as a liberal writer and editor, serving on the Party newspaper *Speech* (Rech'), and with P. B. Struve on the journal *Russian Thought* (Russkaia mysl'). He was active in the political struggles of the Kadets throughout 1917, taking a position on the right wing of the party. With the suppression of the party, Izgoev emigrated, but he continued to carry on anti-Bolshevik propaganda from abroad, and died, quite destitute, in Estonia in 1935.

KOTLIAREVSKII, SERGEI ANDREEVICH (1873-1941), was from a gentry background and took degrees in history and state law at Moscow University where he then became a professor. He was elected to the first Duma as a deputy from Saratov and was also a member of the Central Committee of the Kadet party. Before the revolution he worked closely with the journal *Rus-*

sian Thought and wrote books on questions of law and the state. In 1917, as a Kadet, he was active in establishing ties with business and industrial interests in the Moscow Trade-Industrial Union, and he was considered to be on the right wing of the party.

MURAV'EV, VALERIAN NIKOLAEVICH (?-1932) was the least well known of all the authors of *Out of the Depths*, and there is little bibliographical information available on him. According to N. Poltoratskii's introductory essay to the second edition of the symposium, Murav'ev was a jurist and a publicist who was a co-editor of *Lycée Journal* and a close collaborator on the weekly *Russian Freedom* (Russkaia svoboda). His books include studies of small units of Russian self-government, the Fourth Duma, and Russia's future as a great power, and the future of international relations.

NOVGORODTSEV, PAVEL IVANOVICH (1866-1924), studied jurisprudence at Moscow University and in Berlin and Paris. He returned to Moscow to teach the history and philosophy of law and to direct the Moscow Commercial Institute. He was elected to the First Duma, and when that body was dissolved he signed the Vyborg appeal. Novgorodtsev was less active in politics in the decade before the revolution, but in 1917 was elected to the Central Committee of the Kadets, and assumed a position on the right wing of the party. As events moved out of control he argued against cooperation with the moderate left and he favored a forceful anti-Bolshevik struggle, which led him to cooperation with the White Civil War Generals A. I. Denikin and P. N. Wrangel, at some cost to his own liberal principles. In emigration, he settled in Prague and from 1922 until his death in 1924 was Dean of the Russian Faculty of Law.

POKROVSKII, IOSIF ALEKSEEVICH (1868-1920), was trained as a jurist with special competence in Roman and civil law. At various times he taught at the Dorpat, Kiev, Moscow, and St. Petersburg universities, and at an upper level Women's Institute in Moscow. His *History of Roman Law* was widely used and went into at least four editions. After the Bolshevik victory, he lectured on Roman Law at Moscow University and at the Karl Marx Institute of National Economy.

STRUVE, PETR BERNGARDOVICH (1870-1944) was born into the family of an enlightened upper level civil servant. Educated at Moscow University in the Faculty of Law he went on to a career that combined an extremely active political life with encyclopedic scholarship. His early Marxism served as the basis for his attacks on the whole populist conception of Russia's economic development and Russia's needs. Struve wrote the first Manifesto of the Russian Social Democratic Party in 1898, but his Legal Marxism soon

evolved into revisionism, and in the 1900s, into a liberalism that brought him a leading position in the Kadet Party. He was a member of the Second Duma, and when it was dissolved, in 1907, he taught at the Polytechnic Institute in Moscow, continued his scholarly work in economics and economic history, and edited and published the major liberal organ, the monthly journal *Russian Thought*. With the Bolshevik triumph, he went into active opposition with the White movement, cooperating with the Generals A. I. Denikin and P. N. Wrangel. Following that, Struve continued to play a central role in emigré politics on the right wing of the liberal movement.

FRANK, SEMEN LIUDVIGOVICH (1877-1950), the son of a Jewish doctor, was born in Moscow and studied at the universities of Moscow and Kazan'. Initially attracted to Marxism he engaged in radical student activities and was forced to go to Germany to continue his studies in political economy and philosophy. In Germany, he began to turn from radicalism with a published critique of Marx's labor theory of value. His intellectual development led him through neo-Kantianism toward Christianity and finally to conversion in 1912. Before 1905, he took part in the Union of Liberation, and in 1905, he was involved in the founding congress of the Kadet party. Frank worked in close cooperation with P. B. Struve in editing such publications as the *Polar Star* (*Poliarnaia zvezda*) and *Russian Thought* for the liberal cause. He lectured in philosophy at St. Petersburg and at the newly founded university at Saratov from 1917. In 1921, along with N. A. Berdiaev, he became Dean of the Academy of Spiritual Culture in Moscow, only to be forced out of the country the following year. Living in Germany until 1937, and then in France and England, he withdrew from politics but continued to publish original work in philosophy and Christian thought.

PUBLISHER'S PREFACE [to the First Edition]

The symposium *Signposts*, appearing in 1909, was an appeal and a *warning*. This warning, despite all the sometimes quite furious reaction and polemic it evoked, was in fact only a *timid* diagnosis of Russia's vices, and a weak presentiment of the moral and political catastrophe that appeared menacingly as far back as 1905-1907, and that broke out in 1917. The historian will note that the majority of Russian educated society did not heed the warning it was given, not recognizing the great danger approaching the culture and the state.

The majority of the contributors to *Signposts* have now joined together with newly summoned collaborators to speak out about the collapse that has now taken place—not singly, but as a group of persons who, despite differences in temperaments and views, experience a *single torment* and confess a *single faith*. Some of us look directly at ultimate religious questions of earthly and human existence, pointing directly to a Higher Will. Others dwell on those questions of social life and politics which, not being questions of social mechanisms, at the same time are joined to the religious bases of life only through intermediate links. But equally inherent and dear to all the authors is the conviction that the *positive* principles of social life *are rooted* in the depths of religious consciousness, and that the rupture of this essential bond is a misfortune and a crime. The unprecedented moral and political collapse that came upon our people and our state, they sense to be such a rupture.

P. S.

July 1918

SERGEI ALEKSEEVICH ASKOL'DOV

*The Religious Meaning
of the Russian Revolution*

I. What Revolutions Have in Common

Before we discuss the religious meaning of the Russian revolution, let us pose the question of the religious meaning of revolution in general. Is there anything typical and general in the process called revolution, however? Were we to take this concept in its most primary and general meaning, then obviously we would be treating something too general and ill-defined to be subject to any kind of evaluation. In essence, every acute historical crisis involving some kind of "overturn" in domestic state relations is a revolution. In a certain sense, even war is a revolution. And this is especially clear in the war we have been experiencing, which comprises one unbroken whole with the Russian revolution. Palace *coups d'état*, for example the murder of Paul I, can also fit the concept of revolution by their consequences for the life of the state. Obviously no single judgment can be expressed about such varied processes. But if we narrow the concept of revolution, then we reach a precision which cannot help but be subject to special evaluation, within the limits of the question we posed.

We will take revolution to mean the overthrow *by the people* of some kind of state structure. Now there are several characteristic features common to processes of this type. One such fundamental feature is the special psychology of the *masses*, who feel themselves to be the *directors* of their new historic destiny. In the type of revolutions we are discussing, a new form of government arises for the people, not as an external change for the better or worse, granted, as it were, by fate through the mediation of some particular individuals, but as a certain creative initiative and action which derives *from all and from each*. This distinctive psychological element of a certain distinctive *popular autocracy*—an autocracy whose bearers are the thousands and the millions—is something very important and fateful for the life of a people. Of course, one may say that not only revolution with its acute process of change, but also any stable form of popular sovereignty, for example a democratic republic, is such an atomized autocracy. This is doubtlessly true, but all the same we must recognize this element as especially pronounced in revolution, inasmuch as in revolution it is experienced in especially acute form. Popular rule *in statu nascendi*,¹ that is, in revolution, has a very different psychology from popular

1. "In the state of being born." *Ed.*

rule in any already established forms, not only in the acuteness of the experience, but in its essence. This is true inasmuch as in established state forms events are governed by the very forms that have already arisen and are acknowledged by each participant as something he cannot overcome. But precisely in times of breakdown and crisis, the element of popular rule is still *without form*. As a result, instincts of *arbitrary will* are given a freedom that is unattainable in stable forms. During revolutions, the deceptive mirage of personal autonomy for all and for each, in regard to social organization, is much stronger and more tempting than at any other time. This temptation of arbitrary will spreads in revolutionary mutinies, with infectious speed and strength, to millions of souls, who until then had not thought about their rights, or who, in any case, had not been conscious of them as a real force.

What can be said about this element from a religious point of view? Obviously, that it contains the most conspicuous and acute breach of that exalted religious principle of life—its *organic unity*—which comprises the basis of both individual and social religious life. For the most part, revolution is the power of a plurality over state unity, in whatever form that unity expresses itself. In revolution, the connections which link the plurality of elements into stable state forms dissolve, and they dissolve, not under the impact of forces formed from without, as in the case of war, but specifically under pressure from internal *molecular forces* of the social whole. At such moments the *multitude* takes possession of the whole, replacing its formal and real unity. This taking possession of the whole by a plurality of its parts always leads to a certain *habit* of self-rule on the part of the plurality that is subsequently indelible. There is no doubt that this liberation of the plurality from a form of unity which at a given moment oppresses it—a form that is sometimes distorted and in some way or other abnormal—may give the whole a temporary flourishing of vital activity. At the same time, however, an incurable tendency toward new masteries of the whole by a plurality is introduced into the character of the social organism. Revolution is a process which makes its own *relapses* inevitable. And each such relapse is a fatal movement toward the final and irreparable disintegration of the whole into parts, that is, toward the death of the whole. We emphasize that this distinctive dynamism of the democratic principle has its preeminent expression and development in the process of revolution, and rarely in stable forms of popular rule. To a certain extent, these stable forms always exhibit merely an illusory mirage of the democratic principle. A fixed state structure always imposes some restrictions on the will of the people defined as the plurality of wills. Without the people realizing it, a fixed state structure subordinates them to the principle of the whole and its vital unity. Nor does unity necessarily have to find its empirical expression in the person of a monarch or some kind of dictator. It may be realized in the organization of a parliament, a legislative chamber, a ruling party, in general, in any kind of fixed state construct.

The dynamics of popular rule—the actual seizing of the state whole and its life by a plurality of that whole—is a specific condition of the dissolution of any structure, a condition which characterized the revolutionary periods in the life of nations. I claim that these dynamics always carry within themselves the principle of death of the social whole, because they fundamentally contradict the higher religious principle of life. In periods of revolution, there is always a specter of death over the country, just as in the course of any serious illness. Revolution is the most dangerous of the illnesses of the state and the human community. More precisely it is not merely an illness, but a certain stage in the process of many social illnesses, namely, that stage when life is overwhelmed by collapses and interruptions of physiological functionings which already threaten death. However, just as serious diseases are often overcome and, at times, even lead to some kind of renewal of the afflicted organism, so too revolutionary processes give way to a regeneration of life. Any illness brings its own spiritual renewal, even if in the most primitive form of a dietary lesson and a jolt to man's common sense. But revolutions, like serious illnesses, also bring irreparable consequences with them; in revolutions the social organism always takes a certain irrevocable, although perhaps outwardly imperceptible, step toward its final end. In essence, history offers many individual examples to support this, the most instructive of which are the collapses of the ancient state organisms of Greece and Rome. For the democracy of Athens, this is very clearly evident; for the history of Rome, it is still clouded by many extraneous circumstances and processes.

In acknowledging that the dynamics of popular rule contain the principle of the disintegration of the whole into its constituent elements, we attach a very definite, negative, religious meaning to this process. And in this case theoretical conceptions are fully supported by life itself: The religious and the revolutionary frames of mind represent two psychological formations which are quite incompatible; one always grows at the expense of the other. Revolutions are prepared by, and usually begin with, a weakening of religious consciousness. This is characteristic of ancient as well as modern historical periods. Religion has always been a force binding the state together in an organic unity, regardless of the political form in which that unity was expressed. And, therefore, any revolutionary movement usually has as a preparatory phase a certain withering of religion, sometimes in its own version of an "age of enlightenment." What occurred in fifth-century Athens, or in Rome of the second and first centuries B.C., was analogous to France in the eighteenth century.

This antithesis of religion and revolution, which applies in greater or lesser degree to all religions, is especially pronounced in relation to Christianity. We see in revolution, not only a transposition of the metaphysical principles of life—unity and plurality—one replacing the other in order of subordination, but also a quite clearly expressed psychology of political *seizure*, not only in

regard to formal rights of authority, but also to real objects of material reality. And, what is more, this psychology spreads to the masses, it moves from the thousands to the millions. At such times how can Christ's words about *self-denial* possibly be heard? "Christian politics" as an active structuring of the state, generally has its natural limit, beyond which, unavoidably, an anti-religious tendency of the will begins. That limit plays the role of an arbiter. Christian politics can only be directed toward the realization of someone else's political and social rights, not one's own. Any kind of seizure for oneself is incompatible with Christianity. Of course, revolution also has its own striving toward suprapersonal, objective goals. But this suprapersonal psychology, by and large, is the lot of only a few, while the masses are touched and ignited only in their egotistical instincts. Therefore, an *evolutionary* order of improvement of state forms is closer to Christianity, precisely because the metamorphoses of these forms occur through the central organs of the state organism, without arousing the masses to active seizure.

On the other hand, of course, evolutionary politics can be profoundly anti-Christian. However, in evolutionary politics the masses are still under the safeguard of restrictive state forms of some kind. In these forms some illness of the social organism may be concealed and may be developing, but it has not yet spread over the entire body. Revolution is just like the spreading of such an illness over all the basic components of the organism. It is a kind of feverish condition, which is accompanied by a loss of consciousness and by other life-threatening phenomena. In general, if evolution and revolution are compared, *ceteris paribus*,² then we may say that Christianity requires an organic and therefore evolutionary development of life forms. One may speak only conditionally about revolution in Christianity, meaning by this term only the radical transformation and renewal of religious creativity in a religious environment which had grown cold and numbed. Among other things, the "revolution" of Christ and the early Church consisted of a radical rejection of any *mechanically legalistic* seizure of worldly goods and in a summons to an inner organic transformation of the world. Of course, even in this transformation of the inner structure of the soul, there may be sharpness and suddenness. But between the sharpness of religious renewal and the sharpness of state revolutions, there is as great a difference as between a fresh sprout breaking through the soil under the influence of the sun's rays, and a steel blade mechanically cutting a live sprout, even though the sprout be crooked and in some regard unhealthy.

Of course we must add some very important qualifications to this predominantly religious evaluation of revolution. One must admit that normal evolution, from a religious point of view, is certainly impossible in mundane em-

2. "Other things being equal." *Ed.*

pirical conditions. Here on earth, all sorts of mechanical interruptions and catastrophes are unavoidable. And it is doubtlessly true that *through them* religious creation and maturing also takes place. In this sense, practically speaking, a religious denial of revolution is just as fruitless a judgment as a religious denial of war. But while recognizing the full force and distinctive truth of such an argument, in the sense that it points to empirical unavoidability, we still claim that revolution, like civil war, is profoundly different from wars between separate states. External war, for all of its varied consequences in the domestic life of a nation, is in no way linked directly to internal ruptures of the national state organism. It is never a process which disorganizes the social whole to the same degree as revolution. In wars, state organisms only experience some kind of depression from the outside, without any violation of the basic organic principle of unity. The Russian nation was never so organically united as in the War of 1812, despite the fact that the enemy was in the heart of the state. We won't even mention the profound difference in the psychology of external and civil wars. External wars, based by and large on military conscription, have far fewer feelings of enmity and hate in their psychology than internal, civil wars. A soldier serving his military obligation, while sending destructive shells toward the enemy, is also fully capable of perceiving his enemies as comrades in misfortune, and even of sympathizing with them. This psychology of sympathy frequently even manifests itself in a human and cordial attitude toward prisoners. There is no place for any of this in typical civil wars. Here class enmity and the struggle of parties are much more likely to coincide with feelings of personal enmity and hatred, than in any kind of clash between states, where personal and overall state interests are separated from each other by a number of extremely complex intermediate relationships.

Sometimes, of course, one cannot avoid accepting, and in one's own way justifying, not only war but even revolution from a religious point of view. Disorganizing processes are just as necessary for human history that is incurably poisoned by an element of evil, as surgical operations and in general external treatments are necessary for human organisms that are stricken with illnesses. However, this acceptance and justification from the point of view of unavoidability should not delude us in regard to the meaning of what is happening and its further consequences. From a religious point of view, one must accept even death; however, we still understand that death itself is the final and most fatal result of sin. Revolution is essentially a forewarning of societal death, a forewarning that is only complicated by the revival and renewal that follows. We will comprehend the possibility of such a combination of life and death in one process if we understand that revolution, in its intent, is nevertheless a striving which affirms life, namely, an attempt to carry out a certain vital *metamorphosis* which is contrary to the law of organic development. This is an irreligious substitution of what appears on a religious plane as transfiguration. Just because revolution attempts to carry out a renovation of the

forms of communal life, not from within through unity, but from without by means of a plurality, it suffers a rather far-reaching process of *collapse* of the whole into its component parts and elements. But this collapse, by virtue of the instinct for survival inherent in the social body, evokes as a reaction a *gathering together* of the plurality into some kind of organic whole, in order to avoid ruin. Thus two derivative and evidently self-contradictory elements are joined to revolution as a process of political metamorphosis: first, the element of collapse or anarchy and, second, the element of collection and gathering together. But, because this whole process runs against the law of organic life, even the latter element leads only to false forms of regeneration and renewal. The unification into a whole takes place, not according to a preconceived plan, but to a certain extent by chance, simply to preserve life. Like everything in revolution, this process does not take place by way of inner freedom, but by way of external coercion. This forced collection, occurring as the second half of the revolutionary process, creates some form of state *despotism*. *Revolutionism*, *anarchism*, and *despotism* are three impulses in the life of social organisms, which, however dissimilar externally, are linked together internally and directly give rise to each other. Revolution is an impulse to create a whole, a positive impulse in its creative intent, which, however, falsely proceeds, not from the center, but from a peripheral plurality and arouses its chaotic forces. The origin of this impulse is not in the plurality itself, but in some intervening areas which sometimes stand close to the central unity. It is, so to speak, a disturbance of secondary unities of the whole against the primary unity, a disturbance started, it is true, in the name of the whole, but false in its chosen path and means.

On the plane of religious ontology, what corresponds to this revolt is the revolt of Lucifer against the plan of Divine order, his desire to direct it in his own way, having appropriated for himself the significance of being a central unity. The essential difference here is that in empirical earthly conditions this intention has its justification in that evil which penetrates all earthly state structures. Earthly Luciferism, of course, has every reason to desire something better, reasons that the Angel of the first created world, who was closest to God, did not have. However, this justification is only relative, insofar as, according to the laws of Christ, the evil of this world is not overcome by external opposition, not by mechanical means of force, but only by its internal, organic replacement by the force of good. But it is no doubt true that revolutionary ideology, viewed in its own right, is still imbued with a consciousness of the whole and raises its banner for the sake of the whole. To achieve its goals, however, it turns to forces in which consciousness of the whole is too weak.

The revolutionary ideology casts its mutinous calls into the dark surroundings, not wishing to reckon with the fact that later these surroundings will rise against it. In these surroundings its luminous energy may burn only with dying

red flames. And this red color of the *Morning Star* is not its banner by chance: it is precisely the symbol of the overcoming of light by darkness. Light, having lost touch with its original source and being cast into the dark surroundings which engulf it, inevitably dies out. Darkness consumes it and rises on all and everything. This darkness is the black color of *anarchy*, that impulse of the plurality which does not want to know any kind of whole, any kind of law which creates organic life, and expresses only the egoistical uniqueness of each element in particular. If the interpretation of the basic demonic principles of evil in Christianity and ancient Parseeism, proposed by Viacheslav Ivanov in his penetrating essay, "Countenances and Masks of Russia" (see the symposium, *The National and the Universal*, p. 125),³ is correct, then the demon who animates this unique realm of darkness bears the name of Ariman. From the perspective of the life principle, this realm is a death agony, although it is capable of lasting a long time. It inevitably calls forth an opposite life reflex, which strives to protect life and to build and recreate the decomposing whole again. However, it is no longer possible to recreate by the true religious path, that is, by means of accepting the organizing and formative forces of central unity. An irreligious and anti-religious psychology in elements of the social whole has already atrophied those religious strivings which alone can be real factors in the recreation of organic unity. Instead of love, humility, underestimation of one's significance in the composition of the whole, and self-denial, a Luciferian and Arimanian psychology has aroused in the masses the feelings of class hatred, overconfidence, exaggeration of one's own importance, and a psychology of self-assertion in every respect. Organic unity, which arises from the inner attraction of each element to the others and to the whole, is impossible on such grounds. Organic unity is replaced by the cold, rational construction of a plan for the whole, which must be fulfilled *despite* the instincts and attractions which have developed and strengthened in the masses. One must construct *by force*, by way of intimidation and different means of compulsion. But then the very principle of organic form acquires a false, contradictory character, insofar as this form tries to bond into one whole that which irrepressibly scatters in different directions. This forced and purely mechanical bonding together of the social organism into a whole, which is excruciating for everyone and nevertheless is recognized as unavoidable in life, is achieved through some sort of *despotism*. In despotism, revolutionary creativity is already fading; despotism no longer tries to create a better life according to ideal forms, but cements together those forms which are necessary simply to survive. This mechanical fabrication of life as a temporary suspension of the

3. V. I. Ivanov, "Lik i lichiny Rossii" (Countenances and Masks of Russia), in *Rodnoe i vselenskoe: stati* (The National and the Universal: Articles) (Moscow: G. A. Leman and S. I. Sakharov, 1918), p. 125. *Ed.*

approaching black death is no longer either the life—giving *white* color of the plentitude of the social-religious consciousness, or the seditious *red* color of revolution, or the *black* color of chaotic anarchy. It is a certain colorless, *pale* infirmity, which has only an external similarity to life. This is that “pale horse” spoken of in the Apocalypse.

In her religious revelations—that are so significant that one must lament the current lack of attention given them—A. N. Shmidt interprets the meaning of these last three horses as three brief apocalyptic periods: of sedition (red), of heresy (black), and of unbelief (pale).⁴ This interpretation has its own rationality, which does not entirely coincide with our rationalistic understanding of these symbols. However, this lack of correspondence is not a contradiction, insofar as in both cases what we have in mind are only different aspects of the same occurrences, though they are very complex in composition. Most significant for us in the interpretations of A. N. Shmidt, which in addition are uncertain in details, is not some rationality or other, which may be erroneous or one sided, but the fact that she caught the inner mystical sense of these images, as the final throes of worldly evil which flow out into the forms of human community. In her interpretations one can see more than the symbolic meaning of the colors of the horses of the apocalypse. These colors have already been justified by history. Reality itself has already given impressive confirmation of her insight. It was easy in her time to say that the horse is labelled red in the Apocalypse “for the red banner which was chosen by those who now prepare it.” But during her life, A. N. Shmidt could not yet have known that twelve years after her death there would also appear on the streets of the Russian capital the black banner of anarchy, that truly distinctive heresy which, being generated by the red horse, turns its weapons against it. Of course, as a principled social policy, the anarchist movement in Russia is merely a weak precursor of the apocalyptic reign of the rider of the black horse. However, only the Russian revolution, for the first time, so to speak, obviously warranted this symbol of the future, giving the anarchist movement an influence which it never before had in history and even unfurling its physical symbol—the black banner. After the Russian revolution, one may no longer doubt that anarchism as a social teaching has its own future, its own temptation, and its own inevitability, which had not yet fully matured at the time of the Russian revolution. This temptation is conditioned by the fact that anarchism is a teaching which most parodies Christianity, and in its humanistic distortions is most reminiscent of the warm carefree intimacy of the Christian ideal of community. Anarchism itself proposes that we live as the birds of the heavens live, not worrying about tomorrow and not distinguishing between “mine” and “yours.”

4. A. N. Shmidt, *Iz rukopisei A. N. Shmidta* (From the Manuscripts of A. N. Shmidt) (Moscow: Put', 1916), pp. 178-79.

But were there not forewarnings in history of the pale horse and its rider, whose name is Death? One must think that there were, insofar as death has hovered more than once, if not over humanity, then over separate states. However, what we have here is something covert, behind still darker veils. The essence of death lies in the freezing of life and its internal motions. If revolution and anarchy are conditions of severe illness, a period of fever and the internal chaotic agitation of disorganized elements of the body, then the approach of death is a certain quieting of the chaotic excitation of elemental forces. These forces already exhaust themselves prior to death, and it seems they are vanquished by some sort of pre-death convulsion of life. But this short-lived establishment of a certain organic order is simultaneously the pale face of death. It is a certain calm before the last breath. The kingdom of the rider of the pale horse will also have the same numbing calm. One can imagine that, in past human history, there were also certain forms forewarning and in any case hinting at this final apocalyptic period, which, in essence, merges with the kingdom of Antichrist. For the most part one must seek these forms in periods of political reaction, which followed after revolutionary movements. Most characteristic of these reactions are the weariness and general lack of faith which allow one to accept and compromise with everything. Spiritual life deadens during these reactions, and only the material exterior of life remains. In history, of course, this character of reaction is complicated by new regeneration, insofar as the history of humanity has not yet known complete death, and any crises have been resolved favorably with a stream of fresh enlivening forces.

The kingdom of the rider of the white horse will come in its full and characteristic revelation only when these enlivening forces are no more. Nevertheless, with some justification, one might find historic warnings of it in the ancient history of Athens and Rome, in the brief tyranny of the thirty, in the period of the death of Socrates, and in the despotisms of the protégés of the Roman troops in the first century, A.D. But perhaps the most characteristic expression of the conditions of approaching death was the final period of the French revolution, and also the periods of the Directory, the Consulate, and even the Napoleonic Empire. In Napoleon himself there was undoubtedly something of the apocalypse and of Antichrist. Most of all, perhaps, it was his cynical *utilization* of Christianity as a weapon of his personal political authority, given his complete atheism and even internal opposition to Christianity. The separation of church and state introduced by the revolution was a less dangerous measure for Christianity than the Napoleonic Concordat, according to which the right was granted to the First Consul, and then to the Emperor, to appoint archbishops and bishops, while students were indoctrinated in a special catechism that "to honor and serve the Emperor was the same as to honor and serve God himself."⁵ On the island of St. Helena, Napoleon revealed

5. N. I. Kareev, *Istoriia zapadnoi Evropy v novoe vremia* (History of Western Europe in Modern Times), 7 vols. in 9 (St. Petersburg-Petrograd: M. M. Stasiulevich, 1908-17), IV, 123.

his plans for religion, according to which he would have been the actual leader and ruler of Church life. Napoleon said, "I would have elevated the pope beyond measure, I would have surrounded him with pomp and honor. I would have arranged it so that there would have been no reason for him to lament lost secular authority. I would have made an idol of him, and he would have remained beside me. Paris would have become the capital of the Christian world, and I would have ruled the religious world as well as the political."⁶ All these features of the religious politics of Napoleon are extremely significant, if one takes into consideration that essentially Napoleon dreamt of universal monarchy and half achieved his dream, having overcome almost all of Europe. On the whole, if Vladimir Solov'ev "foretold" the Antichrist, then Napoleon resembled him more than Robespierre or any other one of those "tigers" of the revolution who were open oppressors of the Church. Open enmity of the state toward the Church may likely aid its rebirth through martyrdom; while treacherous patronage may establish an "abomination of desolation" in the holy place. Napoleon did not succeed in doing this; the spirit of Antichrist was not yet ripe in him. While suffering the internal consequence of the deathly illness which France had undergone in the guise of unbelief and a certain mechanistic character of state life, that is, while breathing the spirit of pale death, the Napoleonic regime also uncovered clear streams of fresh regenerating forces! Consequently, even in Napoleon's regime past history gives us only an approximate likeness to that which awaits humanity at the final boundary. Humanity as a whole has not died, and, in essence, one cannot even speak of the death of separate states, insofar as states never have possessed that completeness and separateness of an organism which would make it possible to speak of their births and deaths. Nonetheless, being without question organic formations, states have always found themselves in a certain indissoluble and also organic bond with all of humanity. And this bond has always been therapeutic in the most dangerous moments of state life. While dying in one or another of their forms, at the same time states are constantly renewed by streams of fresh forces that come from without. In this regard, one ought not to compare them with separate organisms, but with the separate organs in the composition of an organism called humanity, or perhaps the earth. While insisting on the correctness and even necessity of an organic understanding of social life, we in no way lose sight of all the approximate-ness and complexity of the analogies possible on the basis of this understanding. Still, this approximateness does not depend on the inapplicability of our point of view to the phenomena we observe, but exclusively on the fact that the principles of organic life are much more complicated and varied in their manifestations than one can see in the small bit of organic life which is acces-

6. *Ibid.*, p. 124.

sible as an experimental field for human observance. And it is precisely in relation to the history of humanity that we go beyond the limits of our customary forms and laws of lower organic life, and are forced to conceive of a higher form of life, into which we ourselves enter as component elements.

In considering revolution as a process of disease, we surely do not want to impose upon this process full responsibility for the fact that human history moves toward its conclusion specifically in revolutions. Just as any serious illness of the human organism partly anticipates death and acquaints one with it beforehand, so too revolutions, as the most dangerous illnesses in the lives of states, include to some degree all the basic symptoms of death, which, certainly from a religious point of view, is the most absolute manifestation of universal evil. But, of course, this ultimate manifestation of the evil, disorganizing forces of community in moments of revolution has its underlying causes in the preceding periods that are sometimes entirely healthy on the surface. And just as an outwardly healthy man, one who even feels healthy, already carries within himself an incurable illness whose outward symptoms will not soon appear, so too revolutions are always generated in the outward calm and well-being of preceding periods. And perhaps on these periods rests the ultimate moral and religious responsibility for the subsequent evil which has its roots in them. We will return to this question when we examine in particular the Russian revolution, which is a good example of this point, that is, which began to germinate long before its external manifestation. But first we will emphasize yet another element in any revolution, a most positive element from a religious point of view.

By bringing evil to fruition and manifesting it in obvious and, so to speak, ripened form, revolution at the same time also serves the good. In revolution the fruits of evil seem to fall from the organism which engendered them, and, what is more important, they clearly manifest its nature. Inasmuch as revolutions are definitely dangerous illnesses, but not ultimate death, and inasmuch as up to this time they have found their cure, they surely have the following two-sided character: on the one hand of the fullest and most striking manifestation of evil, and on the other hand of the most radical liberation from it. However, this two-sidedness does not occur, it may be said, in a single place. Evil and good in revolutions have their different guises and centers of attraction. Revolutions in themselves aid in the *separation* of good and evil, revealing each in its most striking form. And as processes of purification of good from revealed evil, even from a religious perspective, they bear a certain mark of beneficence, and, in essence, they most realize the religious meaning of history, which lies in the separation of good and evil in their matured forms. Christianity has no reason to fear either individual or universal death, because in death only that perishes which must perish, that is, the evil principles of life. But that part of humanity which is true to Christ in revolutions, as in calamities, is purified and made clear. And just as the coming of Antichrist

in force itself signals the imminent triumph of Christ, so too all outbursts of evil forces in the process of revolution are harbingers of new religious ascents and perhaps even transfigurations.

II. *The Soul of the Russian People*

Long before the Russian revolution, the writer of these lines had occasion to discuss the possibility of revolution in Russia with one of his friends, who was a furious enemy of the old order. My friend insisted that revolution in Russia was possible and necessary, and that, of course, in its coming it would not present anything particularly frightening. "Even the Turks have done all this extremely well, so simply and easily," said my friend, "why can't we also cast off our backs this entire gang of scoundrels called the Russian government?" I maintained the opposite, namely, the rather small possibility of revolution in Russia. But if it were to occur, I warned my optimistic friend that it would be played out in proportions and forms reminiscent of the French revolution and probably even surpass it in the force of revolutionary terror. As the grounds for my last supposition, I indicated to my friend the excessively complex and mutually contradictory make-up of the Russian people, in terms of its ideology and vital instincts, and, principally, the typical boldness of its will. My friend proved right in the first assertion, but I in the second. Contrary to my supposition, the Russian revolution still took place. But it is taking place in forms and in proportions that even now, in many regards, are surpassing the great French revolution in their scope.

The Russian soul, like any other, is tripartite and is distinctive only in the combination of its three basic parts. In the composition of any soul there is the *holy* principle, the specifically *human* one, and the *bestial* one. Perhaps the greatest distinction of the Russian soul, in my view, lies in the fact that the middle, specifically human, principle is disproportionately weak in comparison with the national psychology of other peoples. In the Russian man as a type, the *holy* and the *bestial* principles are strongest. This distinctive spiritual symbiosis may seem strange; however, in my view, just such a combination is most natural. An angelic nature, insofar as it is thought to have by-passed a consciousness of good and evil, and insofar as it has preserved in itself a primordial innocence, is in many ways much closer and more kindred to the nature of a beast than to that of a human. It is true that holiness is something other than likeness to angels. But it is nonetheless close to that, and it arises in the overcoming of specifically human spiritual culture. Of course, this approximation of the holy and the bestial has force if, besides the principles of fury and ferocity in the bestial nature, we also keep in mind the principles of softness, timidity, and good nature. The Russian soul, in this regard, contains

within itself all the riches of this nature. Ferocity and good nature, quiet and disquiet, in a word, all that which separately and disjointedly shows through in the bestial guises of the wolf and the hare, the fox and the bear, are included in the Russian soul in complex and occasionally unexpected combinations. This distinctive menagerie of the Russian soul is portrayed with such brilliance and artistic truthfulness by our genre writers—Gogol', Ostrovskii, and Leskov—that it is not necessary to support and illustrate it with any examples. After all, is it not so that Sobakevich is a bear, Korobochka a ewe, and Petukh a good natured boar, who have all somehow strangely come to personify and preserve in human guise the good half of both their physical and spiritual nature.⁷ And where else but in Russia are such symbolic names of people as Kit Kitych (Whale, son of a whale) possible?

Just as brilliantly expressed is the higher part of the Russian soul. Russia's history and literature give us equally varied examples of holiness, both in the specific area of church life and in the forms of spiritual elevation and purity in the relations of ordinary life. But how weakly is "man," as such, portrayed in Russian history and literature: three or four types and not even types, but to a notorious degree artificially created figures such as Chatskii and Rudin.⁸ And this is not because we fell behind in culture, and because the humanist type, in whom the principles of humanity are chiefly expressed, is a type of a cultured man. No, rather I say the opposite. It is not that the backwardness of culture retarded our humanism, but that we had and have no culture because of the weakness of the humanistic principle. Humanism is science independent of religion, ethics, art, society, and technology. It is that by which man distinguishes himself from the beast. But specifically the Russian man, who for the most part combined in himself something of the bestial and of the holy principles, never succeeded in this middle principle and was humanistically uncultured at all stages of his development.

One must touch upon yet another distinct feature of the Russian soul. Revolution, according to its most basic stimulus, is the outgrowth of a certain ethical pathos. But one must admit that on the whole this pathos has never existed in the Russian soul. In general, the ethical level of the Russian soul is not high. Because of that, the Slavophile poet from whom one most of all would have expected an idealization of the Russian people pronounced quite severe judgments on Russia, summarized in the admission that it is "full of

7. Sobakevich and Korobochka are two of the landowners from whom Gogol's Chichikov tries to buy serfs who are no longer living in *Dead Souls*. Petukh is from a short sketch by N. S. Leskov, "The Rooster and His Children." In all cases the characters have characteristics taken from the animal world. *Ed.*

8. Chatskii is the central character in A. S. Griboedov's play, *Gore ot uma* (Misery from Cleverness); Rudin is from the novella of the same name by I. S. Turgenev. The character Rudin is modeled on M. A. Bakunin. *Ed.*

all sorts of vileness.” And just as the holy principle has distinctively combined itself with the bestial in the Russian soul, so too it has distinctively combined itself with the sinful, with a certain outwardly spiritual-material evil that cannot be eradicated. This distinctive combination of the holy and the sinful is explained by the fact that between good and evil there can exist not only external mechanical bonds, for example, the evil principle making use of a facade of goodness as its mask, but also distinctive organic connections. Sometimes particular aspects of evil even correspond to certain aspects of good in spiritual organization. Just as the sweet scent of certain flowers is linked to toxicity, the beauty of grasses linked with their uselessness as food for animals, and, contrarily their usefulness linked with ugliness, so too in the spiritual world—in the human soul—there is a certain fragrance to imperfect souls, a trivial humility of those who do good, and similar odd combinations. But these are not mere chance associations. The most lofty and rare spiritual values develop most successfully and flower splendidly in the forms of evil and spiritual ruin as if in fertilized soil. If one turns to the typical in this area, then one cannot help but recognize the special bond between religious talents and anti-humanistic inclinations. This bond is characteristic specifically for middle levels. And it is undoubtedly organic, in the sense that humanism deflects man’s interest from heaven. Humanism places too much hope on the earth, and even in the most hopeless situations, because of faith in *man* supports a striving only toward earth and toward ideals realizable only through man. Conversely, faith in and love of the heavenly frequently intensifies because of disbelief in man and a certain misanthropy, and even because of coldness and immorality in relation to man and consequently also to egoism. It is true that this faith is most often directed toward the heavenly through tangible and physically concrete forms of cult. Thus, typically, Russian church-mindedness grew together with usuriousness and generally with all humanistically unbridled existence. This growing together of sin and piety was well portrayed by Blok in the following well-known verses:

To sin shamelessly, continuously,
 To lose track of the nights and days,
 And, with a head heavy from drink,
 To enter God’s temple from the side.

Three times to bow down,
 Seven times to make the sign of the cross,
 Secretly to touch the bespattered floor,
 With a burning forehead.

Placing a copper coin in the plate,
 Three and even seven times in a row

Kissing the century-old, shabby
And kiss-smothered rim of the icon.

Then returning home to cheat
Someone out of that same copper coin,
And hiccupping, to kick away
A starving dog from the gate.

And under the lamp by the icon
To drink tea while adding up accounts,
Then flipping through coupons,
Having opened a pot-bellied chest.

And on a fluffy feather bed
To collapse into a deep sleep . . .
Yes, even as you are, my Russia
You are dearer to me than all other lands.⁹

Why does even such a Russia prove to be dearer to the poet than all other lands? It was probably because he intuitively understood that with this drunken hiccup there was somehow inseparably combined—even if not in one and the same person, then perhaps in others close to him—some spiritual values and beauty encountered nowhere else. The polar opposite of such combinations is composed of people, sometimes profound humanists, who are sincerely sensitive and self-denying, but in relation to these qualities are banal to the point of revulsion in their perceptions and evaluations of life, who are deaf to its spiritual beauty, who do not recognize any heights or depths, and who live eternally on the plane of *cultural* benefits such as science, technology, and the improvement of society. For middle levels this flourishing of certain values on the grounds of obvious insufficiencies, and vice-versa, is even characteristic. But, apparently, the same cannot be said about the lofty models of good and evil. And, most of all, *saints* reveal in themselves the unity and the bouquet of religious and moral attainments. At any rate, in the sphere of individual personal relations, typical holiness is above all suspicion. But socially, even saints may belong to “a party” that is wrong from the humanist point of view. And here also the organic link of good and evil enters only in a different area of relations—in suprapersonal relations.

9. Originally entitled “Russia,” Blok dated this poem 26 August 1914. *Ed.*

III. *The Disintegration of the Russian Soul*

This distinctive structure of the Russian soul, which we have tried briefly to characterize, explains to us why for so long there was no revolution in Russia. Revolution is specifically the product of the middle, humanistic layer of human nature. A beast is incapable of creating new social forms. A saint takes little interest in them, and on other grounds is also ill-suited for this. It is specifically man who strives to create and is able to create a better community; it is man, as such, who loves an empirically well-ordered life, who settles on this earth, not for a temporary bivouac like a saint, but with the intention of cultivating these earthly conditions and himself in them for an undetermined time, if not forever.

Up to the nineteenth century no one in Russia even thought about revolution in the West European sense of the word. In nineteenth-century Russia there were only impotent attempts to generate revolution. These attempts were impotent, simply because up to that time revolutionary attitudes were foreign to the people's consciousness and took root only in the upper crust of the Russian intelligentsia. The Russian people were always inclined to, and capable of riot and mutiny, i.e., of movements which have only an external similarity to revolution. Riot or mutiny in the national soul is the same as that emotion of rage or irritation in the soul of an individual man or even a beast. Revolution is a much more complex formation which certainly rests on a definite ideological foundation. In individual psychology it corresponds to the planned and preconceived action of a person who acts by conviction. It is always conditioned by a certain cultural reworking of mind and will and, therefore, has a specifically humanitarian character. However, inoculations of revolutionary ferment became too frequent and too intensive, even for us in Russia. And the revolutionary movement began to strengthen and penetrate ever more deeply into the layers of national consciousness which, in regard to both ideology and will, began to undergo very essential and fatal changes and metamorphoses. One such metamorphosis was the change in the correlation of the two other principles of the Russian national soul—the holy principle and the bestial. Prior to the penetration of humanistic influences into the consciousness of the Russian nation, these two principles, similar in some ways but nevertheless fundamentally opposed, had balanced each other off and led to an organic, if not harmonic, equilibrium. This equilibrium not only manifested itself in social psychology by means of a high-standing authority and the infusion into the entire Russian way of life of religious, church principles to which by and large the bestial elements of the Russian people were nevertheless obedient, but, in a way unusual in the psychology of other nations, it also manifested itself in the souls of individual people. What changes occurred in this strange structure of the Russian soul through these attempts imported from the West to graft humanistic principles on it? As we have already said,

these principles found receptive soil only in a relatively limited stratum of the Russian intelligentsia. Although the influence on the Russian people in this regard was slow, it was successful. Still, the effect in no way corresponded to the intentions. In spite of everything, culture and humanism did not find acceptance among the Russian people as positive impulses; rather they found the paths and soil for spreading and strengthening as negative impulses, which specifically struggle with God and in any case are anti-religious. In other words, the holy principle in the Russian soul little by little was weakened and undermined, the humanistic principle never took root, and the bestial principle was not tamed, and, insofar as people embraced the preachings of class struggle, it even aroused their worst instincts. Such was the condition of the Russian soul toward the beginning of the twentieth century. On this very soil, the revolutionary movement of 1905 arose. And while it did not succeed, neither was it without result. This very failure was very revealing. It clearly showed that, even when shaken to its foundations, the consciousness of the Russian people was incapable of that action which follows from the specifically humanistic principle of the human soul. And one might have doubted whether revolution in general was even possible in Russia. Nevertheless, it has occurred, as something totally unexpected and, generally, as an event independent of human will and calculations.

In addition to the principle of humanism, two other factors conditioned the possibility of a Russian revolution. The first factor was the great European war, which shattered all the usual habits and forms of Russian consciousness and the Russian state system. It was the war itself that removed people from long familiar places, made them more accessible to revolutionary influence, and, most important, changed the traditional spirit and structure of the army. Nevertheless, I believe a more fatal influence in this regard was exerted by the change which gradually had taken place in the upper layer of the Russian soul, in its religious consciousness. No external undermining of the sanctities of the Russian people could have produced the result that was conditioned by the *internal* weakening and change in the core of this principle. The Russian Church, in its empirical worldly organization, was itself the center of the base of religious life from which the weakening and fall of the religious spirit spread. Having a mystical fear of revolution and, in keeping with the spirit of Christianity, supporting the religious bases of existing authority, the Church doubtlessly went beyond the allowable limits of conservative politics. It did not realize that, in linking its fate and authority to the fate of the Russian autocracy, it obliged itself also to insure a certain inner merit in this form and, if not to interfere in the political sphere, then at least to be a voice of religious conscience in relation to everything in state life which provoked this conscience. But precisely in its role as the *conscience* of the Russian state organism, the Orthodox Church since the time of Peter I has been completely inactive. The upper hierarchy of the Church was unable to find the correct middle path be-

tween two equally inadmissible tactics: on the one hand petty and in essence irreligious politicking; and, on the other hand, a tactic of full dissociation from all questions of political life, a dissociation which unavoidably always had the appearance of tacit agreement with all the actions of the autocratic authority. And thus, among representatives of the Russian Church, we see two typical political orientations. One is conservative, which has the depth and authenticity of religious experience, but which cringes before the secular authority, covering all the vices of the latter with its blessings, and in any case never contradicting it. This is the orientation of almost all the upper hierarchy of the Orthodox Church with the Synod at the forefront. The other orientation is the religious renewal movement of the last two decades. Its main deficiency is a weakness of forces and organization. It is a little stream of fresher water unable to refresh the great stagnant lake of Russian religious philistinism. But even this little stream had the truly living water of religious creation and religious will in only a few of its currents. In significant part, this movement was transformed into the hackneyed and in their essence religiously uncreative forms of liberal politicking and unproductive criticism. The middle path, a combination of the entire depth and richness of Church experience and mysticism with the new spirit of community in its constructive potentials, was achieved perhaps only by separate individuals. However, such individuals were few, and naturally they were not able to create that religious revival about which so much was spoken at one time, and which was awaited in vain. And the paralytic Russian Church did not stand up because there was no one to say to it, "arise and go."¹⁰ And the Church began its own kind of internal purulent process, which served to poison some and to tempt others to blasphemy and to falling away from the Church and Christianity.

The actual influence of the notorious "*starets*," Rasputin, bordering on a dominion over the Russian Church, was the personal expression of this process. There is too much that is mystically fatal in the destiny of this *starets* who arose from somewhere in the depths, and too much that is symbolic for Russia's entire past, for us to overlook him while interpreting the Russian revolution. Grigorii Rasputin was the first and most powerful agent of the Russian revolution, because he was himself the main factor in the most profound fall of the visible Russian Church, and in the coming into contact of its sore ulcer with that boundary of the "dead crust of matter," beyond which begins a certain mystery of the invisible Church. It was just this contact that evoked from the corresponding mystical depths the reply, "Enough." And this "Enough," was the Russian revolution, which came as an unprecedented crisis in the life of the Orthodox Church. For many centuries the Russian Church found itself

10. This reference is to the Gospel story of Jesus healing the paralysed man, because of the faith of his friends. (Luke 5, 17-26). *Ed.*

under the protection of the autocracy. But it transformed this condition of protection into a role of political servitude. In the consciousness of the Russian people, that which should have been the bearer of the holy principle of the invisible soul of Russia, "Holy Russia," became an external, tarnished receptacle which offended the dignity of this principle. And this protection, which had become directly harmful rather than beneficial, was taken away. Of course, not the Church alone, but everyone from top to bottom grievously sinned before "Holy Russia," which was driven somewhere into the subconscious depths of the national soul. Truly, this holy part of the soul seems now to be alive only through recollections of the past, because her present has been taken away. And she can only say with the words of the poet:

My soul—Elysium of shades!
Silent, radiant, and beautiful shades,
Taking no part in the thoughts of our violent times,
Taking no part in its joys and sorrows.¹¹

The specific sin of the empirical body of the Church—its state organization—was the fact that the distinctive religious talent of Orthodoxy, and its distinctive feat, was so perverted and turned to the service of an evil principle. The talent we speak of consisted in the predominance of religious *feeling* over religious will, in the particular intimacy and directness of sensing Christ. The specific method of mutual interaction with Christ through feeling and not through will, as is more characteristic of Western religious consciousness, gave to Orthodoxy its great internal freedom. The sacrifices of will in Orthodox consciousness are made up for by a flame of faith and religious endurance, by the joint crucifixion with Christ in his sufferings. This secret substitution of the strength of one religious element to the sphere of another was the particular, blessed gift of the Russian people. This gift justified a certain inattention to moral law, and made it possible to be a "bastion of vileness" while, at the same time, always being imbued with religious light. This substitution and making up for the insufficiencies of one with the merits of another occurred, not only in individual consciousness, but in the collective totality of the Russian soul. The feat of the brotherly substitution of the sins of some by the humility and patience of others was always taking place in Russia. The possibility of such a feat of substitution is supported in patristic literature by the following words, noteworthy for their time, of the religious zealot of the iconoclastic struggles, St. Fedor Studit: "each has his own talents, as it is written: one has one kind, another has another kind. But you, brothers, are bound in a

11. "Dusha moja—Elizium tenei" (My Soul—Elysium of Shades) by F. I. Tiutchev, 1836. *Ed.*

union of love, in the strength of which love you *mutually make the labors and good deeds of one another your own*. You, for example, endure dishonor with good humor, another is distinguished by a love of work, another is rich in silence, and another in divine submission, and by virtue of the community each of you, besides what is yours, has also what is in others: your good deeds pass mutually from one to all and back." (*Love of Goodness*, vol. IV, p. 232.)¹² Precisely because of this gift, the Russian state, which was never the expression of any perfect forms of social life, might nonetheless have been the body in which the higher principle of "Holy Russia" lived. Up to the abolition of serfdom and partly even after it, Russia was a nation of slaves and masters, but this did not prevent it from being "Holy Russia," inasmuch as the cross borne by some was borne with a luminous soul and in general with forgiveness for those who had inflicted it, and insofar as they went together with faith before one and the same Holy Communion Chalice. Thus, in the unity of the national consciousness, the righteousness of the tens of millions cleansed and clarified the sins of several thousand slave owners. Moreover, these sins were not clearly realized as such by either side. It was just this religious feat of the national soul that gave Tiutchev the right to turn to Russia with the words: "native land of long suffering." And this same poet understood that this long suffering was not a simple effort of the will, thoroughly attainable by humanistic consciousness, but specifically a cross borne in the name of Christ, mystically united with the cross borne by Him. Only in that interpretation do the words of the poet become clear:

Weighted down by a cross,
The King of Heaven, in the guise of a slave,
Walks across you, my native land,
Blessing every part of you.¹³

Indeed, the word "slavish" Russia was not a shameful name for Russia of former times, insofar as this slavery was somehow likened to the "slavish image" of Christ. If the national consciousness did not understand, then it undoubtedly sensed this mystery of merging. At that time, there was no place in Russia for humanistic doubts of whether something was moral, and whether something was permissible.¹⁴ But no sooner did humanistic consciousness declare its rights and in its own way explain this doubtlessly abnormal order of things, which was nevertheless religiously justified and so characteristic of the holy-

12. St. Fedor Studit, *Dobrotoliubie* (Love of Goodness), 4 vols. in 1 (Moscow: Sino-dal'naia tipografiia, 1902), IV, 232.

13. "Eti bednye selen'ia" (These Impoverished Villages), by F. I. Tiutchev, 13 August 1855. *Ed.*

14. A line of text missing in the second edition has been restored here. *Ed.*

bestial make-up of the Russian soul, than this very same fact took on a different religious significance. What was excusable at the time of the naive innocence of the Russian soul, at once became an inexcusable sin. The feat of long suffering started to acquire the evil meaning of "the destruction of elementary human and civil rights." Alexander II acted with profound correctness and religious wisdom in removing the temptation from both sides. But the government of old Russia that came after him was not so wise. It did not realize that much is justified by ignorance and the lack of understanding, and that only as a holy-beast could Russia righteously sin and suffer from social infirmities. It did not realize that these very sins had already been transformed into crimes in the revived consciousness and conscience of the Russian people. Yet there was already sufficient material for an understanding of this, even in Russian Orthodox literature.

Among the true sons of the Orthodox Church, even at the end of the last century, Russia had a man who possessed both the sagacity of a prophet and great literary gifts, and many other talents and spiritual virtues that were so outstanding that one must grant their possessor one of the first places in the spiritual leadership of the consciousness of society. Such a man was Vladimir Solov'ev, whose basic theme was precisely the explanation of the *God-manhood* of the religious process. Solov'ev was the man who more than any other was able to indicate and explain that middle path along which the Russian religious community should have gone. But all the influential social groups in Russia, including both the Russian government and the Russian Orthodox Church, *overlooked* this great son of his native country, deigning to notice him only as a talented man of letters and a philosopher. A man born to be the spiritual leader of his people attracted the attention of only a few, as a sharp-witted conversationalist, an interesting journalist, and a rather mysterious eccentric. And thus, not accepting the true prophet, the Church, because of a fatal cluster of committed errors, accepted in his place the false prophet Grigorii Rasputin. The personality of Rasputin is profoundly symbolic, as an expression of the perversion of that special religious talent of the Russian soul we have just mentioned—a perversion of which the most guilty are precisely the bearers of religious consciousness. Rasputin was no doubt a religious man, a man who no doubt understood the specific talent of Russian religious consciousness—to live righteously internally, within a shell of sin. But he did not understand this talent is preserved only in the continuous feat of suffering, patience, and consciousness of one's own sinfulness. The guilt of this man before Russia lies, of course, not in his personal sins, the essence and grievousness of which we do not know, but in the fact that his cynical transgression of the boundaries of the religiously, morally, and socially permitted received statewide and church-wide significance and became the focus of all internal politics. After the unmasking of these politics, from without and within, the times and terms of religious patience for them had already passed. And the Russian revolution occurred as the unexpected judgment of God over them.

I am firmly convinced that the Russian revolution is not an act of human hands, although it was prepared by human efforts. Its unexpectedness and fortuitousness were very much like the unexpectedness and fortuitousness of the great European war, which arose from the successful shot of a Serbian terrorist. And politicians talk in vain about the inevitability of that which in fact is merely *prepared for*. Both the war and the Russian revolution were no doubt prepared for by the sum total of prior conditions. Yet everything might have been limited to this preparation. Combustible material may be prepared and remain, so to speak, in a tempting state ready to ignite from the first spark thrown by chance. However, precisely these chance occurrences are not subject to calculation and are not always created by human hands, especially when an apparently organized concurrence of these chance occurrences seem to be necessary, which was just the case with the outbreak of the Russian revolution.

The Russian revolution proved to be a judgment, not only on the politics and political figures of the old regime, but also on that part of Russian intellectual society which denounced these politics and struggled with them. If the humanists of Russian society had come out for the mastering of the animal principle of the Russian soul in conjunction with the holy, then the entire tone of their denunciations and the form of their actions would have been completely different. Their words would have been heard, and their cause would have been constructive and organic. Such an act would have had every reason to conquer internally, and not externally, and to heal the inveterate ailments of the Russian community. But the humanistic principle of the Russian community appeared in its naked egoism, and even tolerated within itself Luciferian forces directly hostile to Christianity. The Russian liberal and revolutionary movement was by and large irreligious and even hostile to Christianity. Of course, this was not its fault alone. By means of its organic union with the bestial and anti-humanistic principle, the holy principle in the Russian consciousness always led into temptation. The organic character of this link gave occasion to think that one was inseparable from the other. However, this "occasion to think" would have been a justification for any movement except the humanistic movement, which appeared in the full armor of human reason and partly on behalf of this reason. Appearing as an intellectual force, the humanistic principle was not on top of its task, specifically from the point of view of reason itself, insofar as it had not conscientiously and thoroughly come to grips with those phenomena which it criticized and intended to reform. It was not even on top of the philosophical investigation of questions. Precisely because of this, the Russian humanistic movement was deeply permeated with a primitive materialistic spirit, which did not allow it even to consider religion or consequently even the holy principle of the Russian community. Therefore, at a certain stage of its development and the unfolding of its national potentials, Russian philosophy was also completely inactive in regard

to social life. And once again, the same Vladimir Solov'ev passed through this statum of Russian society scarcely noticed. And not only did the Russian irreligious community not submit to the influences of religious principles, but even an opposite phenomenon was seen.

Many Russian public figures who proved in some way to be religiously enlightened and at the same time attuned to the spirit of the progressive community were seduced by that same link of the holy and the anti-humanistic inherent in the Russian soul, and, instead of the evolutionary work of separation and liberation of one from the other, they repudiated the historic Orthodox Church. Meanwhile, despite its fall, this Church still remained the only location of the collective and mystically organic union with God. Wherever a humanistic community was being created, some kind of ubiquitous, mystical presence of Christ was proclaimed, although it might be with full disdain of His Name. Thus, even in the midst of a people with religious consciousness, the soil was prepared for the reception of Antichrist, in the guise of a humanistic public figure. And here, of course, Vladimir Solov'ev was rejected and not recognized. They forgot about him, even as their journalism was watering down his ideologically condensed yet calm censures of Russian church-state politics. But if the humanistic principle of the Russian community altered, and even became hostile to the religious principle, then on what did it rest in raising the banner of protest and revolution? What creative powers did it have in reserve for the construction of a new structure in place of the old decrepit one? It had no such powers. Cut off from the two remaining principles of the Russian soul, from its holy-bestial make-up, the humanistic principle while subverting the first—its higher component part—only liberated the forces of the second, but without any means and ways of directing them according to its own course. In essence, the Russian people remained foreign to humanism, which was born and existed only in the Russian intelligentsia. And when the holy principle died in the Russian people, thanks to the simultaneous influences of temptations from two sides, the right and the left, the beast did not submit to the human principle, but remained free from any principle that would enlighten and elevate it. And, of course, this beast proved more powerful than man. The greatest and fatal error of the Russian liberal movement was the absence of a clear understanding of the beast's real strength.

Russian public figures, while trying to change Russia, never bothered to understand Russia as a country with great designs and potentials, both for good and for evil. They even measured the soul of their motherland according to the pattern of their own souls, which had been neatly tailored in foreign universities. They always acted on the clearly or unclearly recognized assumption that, as soon as the old masters departed, they themselves would occupy their places as the new masters, who, of course, would introduce the needed order. Meanwhile, not only the experience of the West European revolutions, but even that of the Russian revolutionary movement of 1905 taught com-

pletely the opposite: namely, that the Russian public figures who struggled with the old regime, if successful in the struggle, would prove to be an insignificant little group with no real influence on the people; and that with the fall of the old, new forces would arise which would sweep away tested, experienced, and in any case politically honest fighters for Russian freedom. The most typical expression of this limitation of the humanistic principle was the second hero of the Russian revolution, Kerenskii. Just as Rasputin concentrated all the poison of the religious-state sin of the Russian soul, and revealed the internal fall of that part of its make-up which was to have been the expressor of its holy principle, so too Kerenskii, that central figure of the beginning of the Russian revolution, expressed all the ideological poverty and spiritual groundlessness of that layer of society which was the bearer of the humanistic principle. This hero, whose empty revolutionary phraseology so easily captivated Russian society and the people in the first three months of the revolution, soon had to realize that the influence exerted by humanistic ideology over the popular consciousness was only negative, that is, it liberated, but in no way created. The hypnosis of beautiful words soon passed. And experienced and worthy figures fell under attack from a people liberated through their many years of effort, a people who had not thought of the past, nor of the future, but only of the fleeting present moment. Thus an historical judgment was passed on the second stratum of Russian society that expressed in itself the humanistic principle; the October revolution occurred, ending in the full dictatorship of the proletariat. This revolution which was carried out according to the principle of class enmity, roused only instincts of envy, usurpation, and vengeance. In it, not merely the beast, but truly the evil beast that lives in the national soul arose to full height. If the political revolution of February was carried out in the name of the principles of liberty, equality, and fraternity, then the social revolution of October occurred exclusively in the name of material well-being and internationalism, the whole essence of which at the time came down to liberation from the burdens of war. Indeed, under the flag of social revolution, for the first time the principle of the evil beast prevailed over everything else in the Russian people. This evaluation does not apply to socialism as such. Socialism is the offspring of the very same humanism. Moreover, there is something in socialism that formally even coincides with Christianity. And, once again, to this coincidence something directly opposite is joined. In order to comprehend these complex relations fully, one must understand that one and the same norm of social relations can be filled with a different spiritual content.

IV. "*The Holy*," "*The Useful*," "*The Diabolical*"

No doubt there are some norms of life relations which in themselves express the nature, in particular the human nature, of things. Any man, any society, and all of humanity must comply with these norms in order to live and to develop. These norms partly express the principle of justice, as an ontological law of the harmonious correlation of the parts in the unity of a whole. Any religion inevitably requires these norms, for religion considers the essence of things more than anything else. However, in trying to actualize norms of existence, religion wishes to give them firm and deeply laid bases. It wishes to found them on knowledge of the religious bases of life, on subordination to the will of God, and on rejection of all self-assertion. The latter is proposed as the highest feat, despite the fact that the instinct of self-preservation has its place in the norm of justice. However, its place in this corrupt world lies on a slippery path. Here one must always overexcel in terms of self-renunciation, in order not to slide down into erroneous self-assertion. Thus, even Christianity requires natural norms of life, and its moral teaching is directed toward this. And this is a *holy* path, insofar as the natural and the expedient are achieved, not for the sake of useful, empirical results, but for the sake of principles of an other-worldly religious ideal. Give over your cloak to him who asks for a shirt—this principle of the distribution of material goods to all the have-nots is not only holy, but it is also *useful* for social life, for unhealthy inequality is a social evil. In this regard, the task of socialism which strives justly to distribute material goods coincides with the intentions of Christianity. But if religious consciousness is weak, and the empirically useful is not realized in a religious and holy way, this very usefulness begins to claim the simple, healthy sense of life. That which is necessary for life then comes to be realized by the natural inclinations of man, directed toward the empirical process of life as its final goal. Then "the useful" has become the norm necessary for life. Utility is a biological principle; in the area of human relations it is a humanistic one. On the level of saintliness, the person who has in excess *willingly gives* his life advantage to another. On the plan of humanism and utility, between the haves and have-nots there appears a *third party*, who forces the haves to give to the have-nots by juridical law. Thus state legislation operates, or should have operated, for the state is the Leviathan of human utility. But even this Leviathan is often inert in its concern, and in spite of everything, the useful is not realized. Then the Devil himself takes up the matter and realizes that which is necessary and useful for life by his own methods. These methods, although they often intend *the same practical result*, that is the norm of utility, are diametrically opposite by their inner impulse. Equalization takes place, not through giving, but by means of enforced seizure. The proposal to equalize is addressed, not to those who have excess, but to the have-nots. In the holy path, they said, "give" in good will; in the humanistic path, law equalized as a certain neutral

instance; in the diabolic path, they proclaimed "take" and "seize." Outwardly the result would be the same: those who had nothing would be made equal with the excess taken from those who had much. But the whole internal content of the new arrangement of things would be diametrically opposite. Equalization according to the behests of holiness results in a firm bulwark for the new order, in that psychology which is linked to voluntary giving and thankful receiving. Good goes beyond the limits and norms of utility as an equalizer and transforms the social forms of life into another higher form of existence, linked with liberation from the laws of inert matter and equally inert egoism.

The opposite occurs in the diabolic path. Insofar as equalization takes place on grounds of an awakened and aroused self-assertion, the undertaking is not limited to equalization. Instead, the one who had nothing goes beyond the limits of fairness in the other direction; he takes more than is right and unjustly takes revenge. Everything rests on the psychology of self-assertion, and, in the final analysis, even utility as a norm of life is not realized. Evil overflows its boundaries and creates a chaos of self-asserting wills, that is, *hell*. But hell cannot be the goal, even of the Devil. Life is the goal of all beings, and hell as an undoing of life is only the inevitable, fatal consequence of departure from the plane of God's higher order, a consequence equally agonizing for man and for the forces hostile to God. And, in any case, in empirical earthly conditions even these forces strive to resurrect the norm of utility, in order to prolong the historical process as long as possible. Thus *utility* is something intermediate between the kingdom of heaven and hell, equally necessary for the course of human life, and for the goals of God and the Devil. And the history of mankind, as a neutral process, proceeds specifically according to the principle of utility. Utilitarianism is the most natural humanistic theory of morality. For Christianity it is very important that utility be implemented by religious forces. But if this does not work, if the useful is filled with diabolical forces, Christianity must renounce this unreliable form of external good and oppose it from within, despite all the outer coincidence of religious and utilitarian norms. In terms of the realization of utility, the kingdom of Antichrist is also an organization of the most perfect social relations on the basis of principles counter to God. This seductive realm of utility must be rejected by those who will have remained true to Christ at that time when there will take place in the Church, which for the most part is the body of Christ, the outright substitution of Christ, as its true head, for the protege of the Devil, that is, Antichrist.

V. The Triumph of the Beast

Against the background of Russian reality, social revolution undoubtedly did not stand up to the test, even from the point of view of utility. In essence, the Russian people had no interest in socialism, or in any kind of theory; it

required only land, power, and the material well-being linked to the achievement of that power. Most of all it required release from the burdens of war. In essence, even the leaders of the Russian social revolution rejected these theories. Their actions were also guided by a craving for power and a desire to realize their schemes immediately, come what may, without a care in the least for the solidity of those schemes in the future. For precisely this reason many prominent leaders and representatives of socialism, as a theoretical and specifically humanistic construct, found themselves cast to the side as if they were defenders of the bourgeois order. In general, the October, 1917, state overthrow had very little of the "social" in it. It was anti-social in all respects, for in destroying all the basic conditions of social life—property, administrative functioning, international obligations, justice, all basic rights of freedom—and in driving out from the social order, under the malicious nickname "bourzhooies," all classes and strata of society displeasing to extreme demagogues, it halted the vital functions of state. Only intellectual darkness and blindness from passions of gain and revenge could have prevented the people, for whose sake all these frenzied experiments supposedly took place, from seeing that together with the bourgeoisie all the social organizations necessary for any social structure suffered catastrophe. Meanwhile, in the near future, inevitable calamities were being prepared for the very same proletariat that derived only temporary benefit from the situation that had been created. Under the banner of socialism, a process of anarchistic disintegration gradually occurred, which, in fact, was only partly restrained by the efforts of a sufficiently energetic and daring Soviet power that nevertheless was incapable of coping with the aroused passions. The disorganizing character of this entire process was clearly shown by life itself and reported in the press, so that one need not linger long over it. But I believe, that it is not at all the psychology of anger and disorganization that comprises the primary religious evil of the process we are experiencing. Has this not recurred frequently in history and even in much more acute form? And is it possible to demand that crises of human community conform to some kind of norm? The historical process is *cruel* by its nature, and the fates of humanity are not forged with the white gloves of ethical innocence. Much evil is committed by virtue of a kind of fatal inevitability. This inevitability, of course, bound the politics of the revolution, just as it bound the politics of the old regime. In general, the primary evil of the so-called "Bolshevik" overturn and conquest of Russia lies, not in the aroused bestial instincts, but in the *falsehood* and *deceit*, in the stream of false slogans and and phrases that flooded the consciousness of the people. In the paper "On the Connection of Good and Evil" (*Christian Thought*, 1914),¹⁵ I have al-

15. S. A. Askol'dov, "O sviazi dobra i zla" (On the Connection of Good and Evil), in *Khristsianskaia mysl'* (Christian Thought) (1914). Ed.

ready had opportunity to say that lawless actions cannot be compared to persistent falsehood and deceit in their gravity as evil. Any *actions*, as such, can only maim and disfigure the external somatic side of the social and individual organism. Falsehood and deceit, consciously imposed and consciously received, maim and distort the soul. They lend a fatal tendency to the very roots of spiritual life, and, as a more profound layer of evil, become long-enduring factors of future lawlessness. *Words, in the final analysis, bind and fix more than deeds.* The same must be said about that evil which is borne by such unhealthy processes as revolutions. Insofar as they occur with various forms of coercion and destruction of rights, even if carried out under the influence of passions of the basest kind, we are still dealing with something more superficial and easily corrected. But much more fatal for the entire subsequent life of a people is that inner infection of evil, which enters into the national soul in the form of falsehood and deceit, spread with the goal of justifying the evil which is committed. From this point of view, there is nothing comparable in all history to the intensity and quantity of spiritual poison in all the millions of broadsides, newspapers, and proclamations put in circulation by the demagogues of the proletariat during the year of revolution. Truly horrifying is the shameless cynicism with which the demagogues of the revolution one day have accused their enemies of delaying the Constituent Assembly, and with which the next day, having gained power, they have prepared to disperse it by military force. Everything for which the old regime was held to blame, right up to the revolution, in the area of various violations of rights, searches, arrests, punishment, and murder—all this was practiced in nightmarish proportions during the autocracy of the demagogues of the proletariat, to the accompaniment of a complacent “so be it.”

As a result of all this, the social overturn did not lead to the resurrection of justice, but only to a sharp swing of the pendulum of social relations in the opposite direction. After all, in essence, justice itself required the gradual organic equalization of material well-being, insofar as any vital habit creates need, and need is that basic element to which justice conforms. But neither the needs of habit, nor the unique conditions of different forms of social activity, were taken into account in the attempt to equalize everything. Many necessary and fully justifiable norms were violated, norms which expressed the difference and proportionality in the material conditions of life that varied according to the quality of work and life calling of strata and classes of the social whole. Perhaps one might take comfort in the thought that the amplitude of fluctuations in the direction of one or another injustice will begin to diminish in this convulsive process of correction and compensation for the injuries of former times, and that the desired balance of just proportion to all and to each according to worth and needs, in the final analysis, will be achieved. As regards external forms, an approximation of this balance will undoubtedly take place. However, the nature of all these processes is still not fully analogous to the

swings of a pendulum, insofar as they have their own inner spiritual side. And here, in relation to these inner movements of the soul, one can assert something directly opposite to that which is conditioned by inertia and friction in the swing of a pendulum. The soul is not subject to the law of constancy, but to the law of growth, in the specific form of purposeful forces and strivings. According to this law, one should expect, not a weakening of the vital forces of self-assertion and egoism with every swing, but, on the contrary, their growth with every new swing, regardless of the external form of injustice in which they are cast. The practice of the vital forces of egoism that derives from the principle of class struggle in militant socialism actually leads, not to the extinction of these forces, but to their accumulation. And this result of social revolutions is really an unquestionable gain for the principle of Antichrist. It is that principle which, for the first time, has arisen in such clear form in Russian life specifically with the social revolution.

The historical past of Russia contains great sins and lawlessness, and perhaps the greatest among them are the religious persecutions of the Old Believers. But there was no persecution of Christianity on principle in Russia, right up until 1918. And it is not by chance that this persecution is linked to the social revolution. The internal pathos of both movements is essentially the same. In the face of a large number of positively contradictory facts, it is impossible to believe that the social revolution was carried out only for the good of the people, and that it was only a humanistic movement which expressed itself in distorted forms. No, it has a unique, specifically *religious* pathos that is far from utilitarian or ethical, or even egotistical. But this pathos is only a negative pathos in relation to Christianity. Christianity is a religion of the kingdom of heaven, while socialism is a religion of the kingdom of earth. And in the final analysis, the entire and most profound meaning of this unique religious ideal lies not at all in the fact that people in this earthly kingdom would be happy, free, and satisfied. All of these are enticements and external motivating stimuli which gravitate in truth toward one goal—toward the struggle with God.

But, nevertheless, the Antichrist movement in Russia undoubtedly took on the still comparatively innocent mask of the evil beast. This mask has its special personification in the third hero of the Russian revolution, Lenin. However, one need not be a prophet to predict his downfall, as well. It is all too obvious that humanity has not yet approached the final limits, and that seriously ill Russia will recover, even if it be only after its illness has brought both itself and all humanity close to real death. Once again shattered norms of life will be resurrected, once again the good principles of life will strengthen. But evil will also strengthen along with them, and, instructed by failures, it will attempt in another way to take possession of human consciousness. Again, one need not be a prophet to understand that the temptation of the Antichrist movement approaches humanity, not in the guise of an evil wolf, but precise-

ly in the guise of a man animated by the most noble ideals, and capable of introducing them into life in enticing and ethically irreproachable forms. But its essence will remain the same—the creation of social forms on the grounds of submission to man, as if to God. Here, of course, the object of veneration will be, not so much individual man, *but humanity as a generic principle*. The individual person of Antichrist will only incarnate and personify in himself all the desires of a humanity which has forgotten and denied God, as though having entrusted to Antichrist all of its own generic powers and forms of authority.

Up to now we have considered the religious meaning of the Russian revolution from a negative perspective. In summary, we can say that this meaning lies first of all in the disclosure and also the denunciation before human consciousness of three aspects of evil. These aspects of evil consist of the violation by each of the three fundamental principles of the Russian soul of its normal function in relation to the remaining two. Thus the first evil—although concealed in the forms of the old pre-revolutionary regime and, nevertheless, the *primum movens*¹⁶ of the revolution—was the isolation of the holy principle from the human. It was the misuse of that special talent granted to man of freedom from the demands of humanistic ethics and community. In this case, the religious principle became oddly intertwined with the sinful and the unworthy. In its refraction in the depths of human consciousness, it appeared as the enigmatic figure of a rather youthful “holy elder,” who was almost saintly and at the same time too much tempted by the flesh—a simple and at the same time crafty and cunning man. The second evil was manifested in the isolated appearance of the humanistic principle as a self-satisfied person with a lawyer’s hollow rhetoric, which led to the conquest of the beast over both the holy and the humanistic. The third evil was the wrath of the natural beast, set on both the holy and the humanistic in the name of the future kingdom of the beast of the Apocalypse.

All classes and strata of Russian society and the spokesmen for all its basic strivings and tendencies are guilty of these downfalls, insofar as, to one degree or another, they were all accomplices, even if only spiritual, of those who created evil and untruth in the area of the three fundamental principles of the spiritual nature of the Russian people. “Each person bears the guilt of all, in everything”—this is the formula which, in truth, each must apply above all to himself, and each must experience internally, with a view to everything that has happened in the fatal days of the external and internal disgrace of our motherland.

16. “Prime mover.” *Ed.*

The Russian revolution also has its positive meaning, however. This meaning is connected with and, as it were, included in the negative. No trial of history can pass without leaving a trace of its results. And in both the calamities and the evil of the Russian revolution there is also a certain new good. It includes a certain fatal movement forward as regards the fulfillment of the historical process. And this movement forward alone is really something positive. For the religious meaning of history to be realized, the complex intertwining of good and evil must be "unraveled," through active internal efforts. It is necessary to free them from each other, so that evil may be radically and decisively rejected. The Russian revolution teaches this separation and rejection.

We do not presume to judge what socialism actually will lead to, as regards the worsening or bettering of general material well-being. We are prepared only to state that socialism, understood as social justice, has every right to be considered as having a certain historical blessing, from both the humanistic and even the religious points of view. It is a progressive phenomenon, which has a certain essentially justifiable triumph ahead of it. *Something* of its schemes must be embodied in life, for without this embodiment, the evolution of human nature would be unfulfilled and incomplete. For the religious meaning of history, it is extremely important that everything concerning the forms of human existence be done to the end, and that *any* truth be expressed to the end. The completeness of the purely biological form of human nature, in its individual and social manifestations, is a necessary condition for the maturing of both evil and good. The Russian revolution draws us toward this completeness, and warns us of it more than any other historical process of the human past.

But the Russian revolution acquires its greatest religious significance in those calamities and horrors which accompany it. They lead some persons to religion, after many years of apostasy; they confirm others in religion; they teach a religious feat. There are many, scattered all over Russia, who religiously endure gusts of an evil wind, and who do not know from where these squalls of malice have arisen, and why they destroy their lives and the lives of those close to them. There are many who do not consciously accept into their soul the outlines of the beast, which grow ever more clear. There are many who protest and accuse. Finally, Russia already counts no small number of true religious martyrs for Christ and for the Church, who accepted a martyr's death from the fury of unbelief, and from revenge for someone else's sins of the past. And in all this suffering, in this refusal to accept evil into the soul, in this resistance to evil to the extent of one's strength, do there not ripen in the people's soul, along with the habits of evil yet somehow separate from them, other *saintly habits* for the struggle which must be played out in the final days, in those days when to take part in the kingdom of Antichrist will really be an unforgivable sin, a final going over to the banner of the opponent of Christ? Thus, side by side with choking weeks, good ears of corn mature; the ranks of the righteous increase; and all the spiritual qualities necessary for

the creation of a new organism of the Kingdom of God take shape. This ripening is invisible and inaudible, and it does not create a great stir. But it is soundly constructive for the invisible City of God which is being built. Thus, the city of the Prince of the World is being constructed, and by its construction, with fatal inevitability according to the law of the antagonism of forces, it reveals and distinguishes another city, the City of God. Today, Russia is the main arena of these conflicting creations.

We, of course, cannot doubt that the sprouts of evil will be more noticeable, and in any case will have their external, empirical victory. The prevalence of evil in the world, as defined by the words "all the world lies in evil," does not weaken but strengthens toward the end of history. And the progress of good lies, not in quantity, but specifically in the maturation of new qualities. And this maturing of religious values may yield a certain fruit, even against the background of a general withering and covert preparation for death. Perhaps humanity is destined to experience a brief, happy autumn of life. Perhaps somewhere, in brief but nonetheless clear form, this autumn will reveal that complete revelation of the Christian ideal of community which many Christian mystics had a presentiment of, and which, understood as a new religious revelation that is overcoming Christianity, represents for some the temptation of the "third testament." If this comes about from the same seedlings of good that were produced by the calamities, torments, and other trials and lessons of the Russian revolution, then this, of course, will be its most important positive result and its greatest religious significance.

29 April 1918

NIKOLAI ALEKSANDROVICH BERDIAEV

*Specters of the
Russian Revolution*

We have lost our way. What shall we do?
Into the field the demons evidently led us,
They surround us on every side.

—Pushkin

Introduction

A terrible catastrophe has befallen Russia. It has fallen into a dark abyss. And for many it begins to appear that a unified and great Russia was only an apparition, that it never really existed. It is not easy to grasp the connection between our present and our past. The expression on the face of the Russian people has changed so much, that after several months it has become unrecognizable. At first glance, it would seem that a revolution has occurred in Russia, unprecedented in its radicalism. But a deeper and more penetrating understanding must reveal in Russia the revolutionary image of old Russia, specters long since displayed in the works of our great writers, demons which for a long time have possessed the Russian people. Much that is old and long familiar appears, only in a new guise. A long historical path leads to revolutions, and they reveal a national uniqueness even when they convey heavy blows to national might and to national dignity. Every nation has its own revolutionary style, just as it has its conservative style. The English revolution was national in style, just as the French revolution was. In them one can recognize the past of England and France. Every people makes a revolution with the spiritual baggage accumulated in its past; it brings into revolutions its sins and vices, but also its capacity for sacrifice and enthusiasm. The Russian revolution was anti-national in character; it turned Russia into a lifeless corpse. But even its anti-national character expressed the national uniqueness of the Russian people and our style of unfortunate and pernicious revolution—the Russian style. Our old national illnesses and sins led to the revolution and defined its character. The specters of the Russian revolution are Russian specters, even though they were also utilized by our enemies for our ruin. The deception of the revolution is a Russian deception.¹ Its obsession is a typical Russian obsession. Revolutions

1. This line is omitted in the second edition. *Ed.*

which occur on the surface of life neither change nor reveal anything essential, they only uncover sicknesses hidden within the national organism, they rearrange all the same elements in a new way, and present old forms in a new clothing. To a considerable degree, revolution is always a masquerade, and if one tears away the mask then one will meet the old, familiar faces. New souls are born later, after the profound revival and interpretation of the experience of revolution. On the surface everything appears new in the Russian revolution—new facial expressions, new gestures, new clothes, and new formulas governing life. Those who were below were raised to the highest pinnacle, and those who were above fell down; those who had been persecuted rule, and those who had ruled are persecuted; slaves became boundlessly free, and those free in spirit are subject to coercion. But try to penetrate beyond the superficial exterior of revolutionary Russia, into the depths. There you will recognize the old Russia, and you will meet old familiar faces. The immortal figures of Khlestakov, of Petr Verkhovenskii and Smerdiakov are met at every turn in revolutionary Russia, and play no small role in it. They steal up to the very heights of power. The metaphysical dialectics of Dostoevskii and the moral reflections of Tolstoi determine the inner course of the revolution. If you go into the depths of Russia, then behind the revolutionary struggle and the revolutionary phraseology it is not difficult to discover the grunting snouts and mugs of Gogol'. Every people, at any moment of its existence, lives in different times and different centuries. But there is no people in which so many different ages are united, which so combined the twentieth century with the fourteenth, as the Russian people. And this variety of ages is a source of ill-health and a hindrance to the integrity of our national life.

Great writers have always revealed images of national life which have essential significance and permanence. Russia, as it revealed itself to its great writers, the Russia of Gogol' and Dostoevskii, may also be found in the Russian revolution. There you also encounter the fundamental evaluations and predeterminations of L. Tolstoi. In the characters of Gogol' and Dostoevskii, and in the moral evaluations of Tolstoi, one may seek the key to those miseries and misfortunes which the revolution brought to our country, and the acquaintance of specters which rule the revolution. Gogol' and Dostoevskii had artistic insights into Russia and the Russian people that went beyond their times. Russia was revealed to them in different ways, and their artistic methods were opposite, but each one had something truly prophetic for Russia, something that penetrated into the very essence and most secret nature of Russian man. For our purposes, Tolstoi as an artist is not of interest. The Russia revealed in his great art decomposed and died in the Russian revolution. He was an artist of the static elements of the Russian noble and peasant way of life. As an artist, the eternal was revealed to him only in elementary natural elements. Tolstoi was more cosmic than anthropological. But the Russian revolution revealed another Tolstoi, a Tolstoi of moral judgment who in his own way triumphed.

Tolstoism was seen to be characteristic for the Russian contemplation of the world and its world view. Many Russian demons were revealed to Russian writers, or possessed them—the demon of the lie and illusion, the demon of equality, the demon of dishonor, the demon of negation, the demon of non-resistance and many, many others. All of these nihilistic demons have long tormented Russia. At the center, for me, stand the insights of Dostoevskii, who prophetically revealed all the spiritual bases and driving springs of the Russian revolution. But I will begin with Gogol', whose significance in this respect is less clear.

I. Gogol' in the Russian Revolution

Gogol' belongs to the most enigmatic of Russian writers, and not enough effort has been made to understand him. He is more enigmatic than Dostoevskii. Dostoevskii himself did much to uncover all the contradictions and depths of his spirit. It is obvious how the devil struggles with God in his soul and in his works. But Gogol' concealed himself, and took some unsolved mysteries with him to the grave. There is something truly eerie about him. Gogol' was the only Russian writer in whom there was a sense of the magical; he artistically conveys the activity of dark, evil, magical forces. This probably came to him from the west, from Catholic Poland. His story, "The Enchanted Place," is saturated with such a feeling of the magical. But, in more concealed forms, the sense of the magical is also in *Dead Souls* and *The Inspector General*. Gogol' was totally exceptional in the strength of his sense of evil. And he did not find that comfort which Dostoevskii found in the figure of Zosima, and in contact with mother earth. He does not have all those sticky spring leaves; nowhere is there any salvation from the demonic mugs that surround him. The old school of Russian critics in no way sensed the eeriness of Gogol's art. Indeed, how could they possibly be sensitive to Gogol'? They were shielded from the reception and understanding of such eerie phenomena by their rationalistic education. Our criticism was too "progressive" a style of thought for this; it did not believe in evil spirits, and it wanted to use Gogol' only for its own utilitarian, social goals. You know, it always utilized the works of great writers for utilitarian, social preaching. The first to feel the eeriness of Gogol' was V. V. Rozanov, a writer of another school, another source, and another spirit.² He does not like Gogol' and writes about him with a malicious feeling, but he understood that Gogol' was an artist of evil. What one must establish, first of all, is that the work of Gogol' is an artistic revelation of evil as a metaphysical and

2. For Rozanov's views on Gogol', see Vasily Rozanov, *Dostoevsky and the Legend of the Grand Inquisitor*, trans. Spencer E. Roberts (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell Univ. Press, 1972), ch. 2. Berdiaev relies heavily on this work for the part of this essay on Dostoevskii. Ed.

internal principle, and not of a social and external evil linked with political backwardness and lack of enlightenment. It was not given to Gogol' to see images of good and to represent them artistically. This was his tragedy. He was frightened himself by his exclusive vision of images of evil and abnormality. But his spiritual lameness also engendered all the acuteness of his artistic evil.

The problem of Gogol' arose only with those religious, philosophical, and artistic tendencies that took shape in Russia at the beginning of the twentieth century. Gogol' had usually been considered the founder of the realistic trend in Russian literature. The strangeness in Gogol''s works had been explained exclusively by the fact that he was a satirist and that he portrayed the falsehood of old serf-bound Russia. They overlooked all the singularity of Gogol''s artistic methods. They saw nothing problematical in Gogol''s works, because, in general, they never saw anything problematical. Everything appeared to Russian criticism as clear and easily explainable; everything was definite and was reduced to an elementary utilitarian task. Truly, one may say that the critical school of Belinskii, Chernyshevskii, Dobroliubov, and their epigones overlooked the inner meaning of great Russian literature, and was not able to evaluate its artistic revelation. It was necessary to undergo a spiritual crisis, it was necessary to have shaken all the bases of the traditional intelligentsia's world view, in order to reveal anew the creative works of great Russian writers. Only then did it become possible even to approach Gogol'. The old view of Gogol', as a realist and a satirist, demands radical review. Certainly now, with our more complicated psyches and our thoughts, it is all too clear that the literary Old Believers' view of Gogol' misses the point of the Gogol' problem. It seems monstrous to us that they could see realism in *Dead Souls*, an unbelievable and fantastic work. The strange and mysterious creative work of Gogol' cannot be assigned to the category of social satires, which criticize the temporary and passing vices and sins of prereform Russian society. Dead souls have no necessary and indissoluble link with the way of life of serfdom, or the inspector general with prereform bureaucracy. And now, after all the reforms and revolutions, Russia is full of dead souls and inspectors general. Gogol''s images did not die and did not fade into the past, like the images of Turgenev or Goncharov. The artistic methods of Gogol', which least of all may be called realistic and represent an original experiment that dismembers and divides the organic totality of reality, reveal something very essential for Russia and for Russian man, a kind of spiritual illness, not curable by any external social reforms and revolutions. Gogolian Russia is not only our prereform way of life; it belongs to the metaphysical character of the Russian people, and it is also displayed in the Russian revolution. That inhuman boorishness which Gogol' saw is not an offspring of the old order, it is not conditioned by social and political factors; on the contrary, boorishness gave birth to all that was nasty in the old order, it was imprinted onto political and social forms.

As an artist, Gogol' anticipated the most recent analytical currents in art,

which are revealed in connection with the crisis of art. He anticipated the art of A. Belyi and Picasso. He already had those perceptions of reality that led to Cubism. His art even showed a cubistic dismemberment of living being. Gogol' already saw those monsters which Picasso later saw artistically. But Gogol' was deceptive, because he covered his demonic visions with laughter. Among recent Russian artists, the most gifted of them to follow Gogol' is Andrei Belyi, who also submerged a totally dim image of man in a cosmic whirlwind. A. Belyi does not see the organic beauty in man, any more than Gogol' saw it. In many ways, he follows after the artistic methods of Gogol', but achieves something completely new in the area of form. Gogol' already subjected the whole organic image of man to analytic dismemberment. With Gogol' there are no human images, but only snouts and mugs, only monsters, like the well-built monsters of cubism. His work shows the murder of man. And Rozanov frankly accuses him of the murder of man. Gogol' was not able to produce positive human images and suffered greatly from this fact. In agony he sought the image of man, and did not find it; horrible and inhuman monsters surrounded him on all sides. This was his tragedy. He believed in man, sought the beauty of man, and did not find it in Russia. There was something indescribably painful in this; it could have led to madness. Gogol' himself had some kind of spiritual dislocation, and he bore within himself some kind of unresolved secret. But one cannot blame him for the fact that, instead of an image of man, in Russia he saw Chichikov, Nozdrev, Sobakevich, Khlestakov, Skvoznik-Dmukhanovskii, and other such monsters.³ His great and unlikely artistry revealed the negative side of the Russian people, its dark specters, and everything in it which was inhuman and which distorted the image and likeness of God. This inability to discover the human personality in Russia, this abundance of elemental specters of nature instead of people, frightened and wounded him. Gogol' was an artist of the infernal. Gogol''s images were the tatters of people, but not people; they were the grimaces of people. It was not his fault that in Russia there were so few human images or authentic personalities, and so many lies and false images, so many illusions and so much formlessness and ugliness. Gogol' suffered endlessly from this. His gift of insight into the specters of vulgarity was an unfortunate gift, and he fell victim to that gift. He uncovered the unbearable evil of vulgarity and this oppressed him. A. Belyi found no image of man either, but he already belongs to another period, when faith in the image of man had been shaken. Gogol' still had that faith.

The Russian people who desired and placed great hopes in revolution believed that the monstrous images of Gogol''s Russia would disappear when the

3. Chichikov, the picaresque hero of *Dead Souls*, acquires his souls from Nozdrev and Sobakevich, among others. In *The Inspector General*, the n'er-do-well Khlestakov, under mistaken identity, swindles the corrupt Skvoznik-Dmukhanovskii and his fellow townsmen. *Ed.*

revolutionary storm cleansed us from all pollution. In Khlestakov and Skvoznik-Dmukhanovskii, in Chichikov and Nozdrev, they saw only images of old Russia, raised on autocracy and serfdom. This was the error of revolutionary consciousness, which could not penetrate into the depths of life. The revolution uncovered all the same old, eternally-Gogolian Russia, that inhuman, half-animal Russia of mugs and snouts. There is something eternally Gogolian in the unbearable revolutionary vulgarity. All those hopes that revolution would reveal the human image in Russia, and that the human personality would rise to its full height after the fall of autocracy, were in vain. We had grown too accustomed to blame the autocracy, for we wanted to use it to explain all the evil and darkness in our lives. But, in this way, the Russian people cast from itself the burden of responsibility and taught itself irresponsibility. However, when autocracy was no more, Russian darkness and Russian evil remained. Darkness and evil lay deeper, not in the social coverings of the people, but in its spiritual core. The old autocracy is no more, but despotism still rules in Russia, and there is still no respect for man, for human worth, or for human rights. The old autocracy is no more, and the old bureaucracy and the old police are gone, but bribery still is the mainstay of Russian life, its fundamental constitution. Bribery flourishes more than ever before. Grandiose profits are made on the revolution. Scenes from Gogol' are played out at every turn in revolutionary Russia. The autocracy is no more, but Khlestakov still makes himself out to be an important bureaucrat, and all still tremble before him. The autocracy is no more, but Russia is still full of dead souls, and there is still a trade in them.

Khlestakovian audacity makes itself felt at every turn in the Russian revolution. But now Khlestakov rising to the pinnacle of power has more grounds than ever to say: "the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the French Ambassador, the English and German Ambassadors, and I," or "it would be interesting to observe my anteroom, when I am not yet awakened: counts and princes jostle each other and buzz around like bees." The revolutionary Khlestakovs with great fidelity to life might say: "Who would take his place? Many generals volunteered and tried it, but they found out it was too complicated for them. . . . There was no other way, they had to turn to me. And all at once, all along the streets, there were couriers, couriers, and more couriers. . . . you can imagine yourself, thirty-five thousand couriers alone!" And a revolutionary Ivan Aleksandrovich undertakes to direct an office. And when he passes by, "simply an earthquake, everything shakes and trembles like a leaf." The revolutionary Ivan Aleksandrovich becomes excited and shrieks: "I don't like to joke, I will threaten them all. . . . That's the way I am. I won't follow anyone's example. . . I am everywhere, everywhere."⁴ Those Khlestakovian speeches we hear every day and at every turn. All shake and tremble. But knowing the history of the old

4. Khlestakov's ravings are taken from Act III, scene 6 of *The Inspector General*. Ed.

and eternal Khlestakov, in the depths of our souls we expect a gendarme will come up and say: "The official who has just arrived by specific command from St. Petersburg calls you immediately to appear before him." The fear of counter-revolution, which has poisoned the Russian revolution, also gives a Khlestakovian character to revolutionary daring. This ever-present expectation of the gendarme points to the deception and falseness of revolutionary achievement. We will not be deceived by externals. The revolutionary Khlestakov appears in a new set of clothes and calls himself by another name. But the essence remains the same. Thirty-five thousand couriers might be representatives "of the Soviet of Worker and Soldiers Deputies," but that does not alter the case. At the basis rests the old Russian lie and deception, seen by Gogol' long before. Being cut off from the depths makes all actions too easy. In the forces that now rule and govern, there is just as little of the ontological, of the genuinely existent, as in Gogol's Khlestakov. Nozdrev said, "Here is the border! Everything that you see on this side—all this is mine, and even on the other side, all that forest which over there seems blue, and all that beyond the forest—all is mine."⁵ In a large part of what is appropriated by the revolution there is something Nozdrevian. The mask substitutes for the person. Everywhere masks, doubles, grimaces, and tatters of men. A belying of existence rules the revolution. Everything is illusory. Illusory are all parties, illusory are all authorities, illusory are all the heroes of the revolution. Nowhere can one discover firm being, nowhere can one see a clearly human face. This illusory quality, this absence of the ontological, is born from falsehood. Gogol' revealed it in the Russian nature.

As before, Chichikov travels around Russia and deals in dead souls. However, he does not travel slowly in a *kibitka*, rather he races by courier train and sends telegrams everywhere. The same forces work at a new tempo. The revolutionary Chichikovs buy up and resell non-existent wealth; they deal in fictions and not in realities; they transform the economic life of Russia into a fiction. Many directives of the revolutionary authorities are positively Gogolian in their nature, and the great mass of philistines give them a Gogolian reception. In the nature of the revolution, colossal cheating and dishonor are revealed as illnesses of the Russian soul. Our entire revolution appears to be a dishonorable haggling, a haggling for the people's soul and the people's property. Our entire agrarian reform, S. R. and Bolshevik, is a Chichikovian undertaking. It operates with dead souls, and it raises the national wealth to a level of illusion and unreality. In it, there is Chichikovian daring. In our summer hero of the agrarian revolution there was truly something Gogolian. There was no small amount

5. These words of Nozdrev, from chapter 4 of *Dead Souls*, suggest what Berdiaev would have his reader see as the Nozdrevian part of the Russian revolution: namely, falsehood and irresponsible exaggeration, without clearly defined or worthy purpose. *Ed.*

of similar Manilovism⁶ in the first period of the revolution and in the revolutionary Provisional Government. But *Dead Souls* also has a deep symbolic meaning. All the mugs and snouts of Gogol's epic appear on the soil of the numbness of the Russian soul. The numbness of the soul makes possible Chichikovian escapades and encounters. This protracted and long-standing numbness of the soul is also felt in the Russian revolution. Therefore, its shameful haggling and its insolent deceit were also possible. The revolution did not create this by itself. The revolution was a great developer, and it developed only that which was secreted in the depths of Russia. The forms of the old order restricted the manifestation of many Russian characteristics and put artificial constraints on them. The fall of these decrepit forms led to the fact that Russian man was completely unbridled and appeared stark naked. The evil specters which Gogol saw in their static form tore themselves free and indulged in an orgy. Their grimaces caused the unfortunate body of Russia to shudder. For the Khlestakovs and the Chichikovs, there is now greater freedom than in the time of autocracy. And liberation from them presupposes a spiritual rebirth of the people, a transformation within the people. Revolution is not such a transformation. A true spiritual revolution in Russia would be a liberation from that falsehood which Gogol saw in the Russian people, and a victory over the illusion and substitution which grows out of falsehood. In the lie there is the easiness of irresponsibility, it is not linked to any kind of life reality, and on the lie one can construct the most daring revolution. Gogol revealed dishonor as a primordial Russian characteristic. This dishonor was related to the undeveloped and unexpressed nature of personality in Russia, to repression of the human image. It was also linked to the inhuman vulgarity with which Gogol depressed us, and with which he was himself depressed. Gogol viewed Russia more profoundly than the Slavophiles. He had a strong sense of evil, which the Slavophiles did not have. In eternally Gogolian Russia, the tragic and the comic are interlaced and confused. The comic is the result of confusion and substitution. This confusion and interlacing of the tragic and the comic is also in the Russian revolution. The revolution is entirely based on confusion and substitution, and therefore it has much of the nature of comedy. The Russian revolution is tragic-comedy. It is the finale of the Gogolian epic. And perhaps the most dismal and hopeless thing about the Russian revolution is the Gogolian element. In its Dostoevskian element there are more rays of hope. Russia must liberate itself from the power of Gogolian specters.

6. Manilov, Chichikov's first supplier of souls, comes across as decent enough in superficial ways, but without clear definition, or resolute decision, and intellectually decidedly mediocre. See chapter 2 of *Dead Souls*. Ed.

II. *Dostoevskii in the Russian Revolution*

If Gogol's presence in the Russian revolution is not immediately apparent, and even the raising of the theme evokes doubts, then it is impossible not to see Dostoevskii as the prophet of the Russian revolution. The Russian revolution is steeped in those principles which Dostoevskii perceived, and to which he gave brilliantly sharp definition. Dostoevskii was able to expose the dialectics of Russian revolutionary thought to the depths, and to draw the ultimate conclusions from it. He did not remain on the surface of social-political ideas and structures; he penetrated to the depths and revealed the metaphysics of Russian revolutionism.⁷ Dostoevskii showed that Russian revolutionism is a metaphysical and religious phenomenon, and not a political and social one. Thus, religiously, he was able to grasp the nature of Russian socialism. Russian socialism is occupied with the question of whether or not there is a God, and Dostoevskii foresaw how bitter the fruits of Russian socialism would be. He revealed the nature of Russian nihilism and Russian atheism, which is unique and unlike the Western. Dostoevskii had the brilliant gifts of disclosing the depths and revealing ultimate limits. He never remains in the middle; he never rests in a transitory state; he always draws you to the final and the ultimate. His creative, artistic act is apocalyptic, and in this he is the true Russian national genius. Dostoevskii's method is different from that of Gogol'. Gogol' is the more accomplished artist. Dostoevskii is primarily a psychologist and metaphysician. He reveals evil and evil specters from within the psychic life of man and from within the dialectics of his thought. All of Dostoevskii's creative work is an anthropological revelation—a revelation of the human depths, not only the psychic, but also the spiritual depths. Revealed to him were those human thoughts and those human passions which already represent, not the psychology, but the ontology of human nature. With Dostoevskii, in contrast to Gogol', the image of man always remains, and the fate of man is revealed from within. Evil does not ultimately destroy the human image. Dostoevskii believes that by the path of inner catastrophe evil may be transformed into good. And therefore his creative work is less terrifying than the creative work of Gogol', who retained almost no hope.

In Dostoevskii, the greatest of Russian geniuses, one may study the nature of Russian thought, its positive and negative poles. A Frenchman is either a dogmatist or a skeptic: a dogmatist at the positive pole of his thought and a skeptic at the negative pole. A German is either a mystic or a critic: a mystic at the positive pole and a critic at the negative. But a Russian is *either an apocalypticist or a nihilist: an apocalypticist at the positive pole and a nihilist at the negative pole*. The Russian case is the most extreme and the most difficult.

7. There are confusing misprints at this place in the text of the second edition. *Ed.*

The Frenchman and the German can create culture, because one can create culture dogmatically and skeptically and one can create it mystically and critically. But it is difficult, very difficult, to create culture apocalyptically and nihilistically. Culture can have dogmatic and mystical depth beneath it, but it presupposes that beyond the midst of the life process, a certain value is recognized wherein, not only the absolute, but also the relative has significance. The apocalyptic and the nihilistic attitude casts away the entire middle of the life process and all the historical stages. It does not want to know any values of culture; it strives to the end, to the limit. These antipodes easily transform into each other. Apocalypticism easily transforms into nihilism, and it may appear to be nihilistic in relation to the greatest values of earthly historical life and to all culture. Nihilism may imperceptibly acquire an apocalyptic tint, and it may appear to be a demand for the end. In Russian man the apocalyptic and the nihilistic were so intermixed and so entangled, that it was difficult to distinguish between these polar opposite principles. It is not easy to decide whether it is from his apocalypticism or his nihilism that the Russian man denies the state, culture, the homeland, normative morals, science, and art; why he demands absolute negation. The Russian man may commit a nihilistic pogrom, just as easily as an apocalyptic one. He may uncover himself, take off all covering and appear stark naked, just as much because he is a nihilist and denies everything, as because he is full of apocalyptic presentiments and expects the end of the world.

Among Russian sectarians, apocalypticism is interwoven and intermixed with nihilism. The same occurs in the intelligentsia. The Russian search for the truths of life always assumes an apocalyptic or a nihilistic character. This is a profound national trait. It provides the grounds for confusion and substitution, for pseudoreligion. In Russian atheism itself there is something of the apocalyptic spirit, not at all like the atheism of the West. And in Russian nihilism there is a pseudoreligious feature, there is a kind of reverse religion. This tempts many and leads them into error. Dostoevskii profoundly revealed the apocalypticism and the nihilism in the Russian soul. Therefore, he guessed the character that the Russian revolution would assume. He understood that the revolution would not mean the same thing for us, as for the West, and therefore it would be more terrible and extreme than Western revolutions. The Russian revolution is a phenomenon of a religious order, it decides questions about God. And one must understand this in a more profound sense than one understands the anti-religious character of the French revolution, or the religious character of the English revolution.

For Dostoevskii, the problem of the Russian revolution, of Russian nihilism and socialism, was in essence a religious problem, a question about God and immortality. "Socialism is not only a question of workers or that so-called fourth estate, but it is predominantly a question of atheism, a question of the contemporary embodiment of atheism, a question of the tower of Babel which

is being built specifically without God, not for the attainment of heaven from earth, but for the bringing of heaven down to earth" (*The Brothers Karamazov*). One might even say that the question of Russian socialism and nihilism is an apocalyptic question directed toward the all-absolving final end. Russian revolutionary socialism was never thought of as a transitory condition, as a temporary and relative form of societal organization; it was always thought of as an ultimate condition, as the Kingdom of God on earth, and as the answer to a question about the fate of humanity. This was not an economic or a political question, but primarily a question of the spirit, a religious question. "Do you know how Russian boys behave, even now? For example, there is a stinking local tavern, and here they gather, they sit in a corner. . . . What will they talk about? About world questions, nothing else: is there a God? is there immortality? And those who do not believe in God talk about socialism and about anarchism, about the remaking of all humanity according to a new order. After all, this is one and the same devil, the very same questions, only seen from the other end."⁸ These Russian youths were never capable of politics, of the creation and building of social life. Everything was mixed up in their heads and, having denied God, they made a God out of socialism and anarchism. They wanted to remake all humanity according to the new order, and they saw in this, not a relative, but an absolute task. Russian youths were nihilist-apocalypticists. They began by carrying on endless conversations in stinking taverns. And it was difficult to believe that these conversations about the replacement of God by socialism and anarchism, and about the remaking of all humanity according to a new order, might become determining forces in Russian history and shatter Great Russia. Russian youths had long proclaimed that if there was no God and immortality, all was allowed. There remained only well-being on earth as a goal. It was on this soil that Russian nihilism grew, appearing to many naive and well-meaning people as a very harmless and attractive phenomenon. Many even saw moral truth in it, but truth distorted with intellectual delusions. Even Vladimir Solov'ev did not understand the dangers of Russian nihilism when he jokingly formulated the *credo* of Russian youth in the following way: "Man descended from monkeys, therefore, we must love one another." Dostoevskii penetrated more profoundly into the secrets of Russian nihilism and sensed the danger. He uncovered the dialectics of Russian nihilism and its concealed metaphysics.

Ivan Karamazov is the philosopher of Russian nihilism and atheism. He proclaims the rebellion against God and God's world from very high motives—he cannot reconcile himself to the tiny tear of an innocent, tormented child. Ivan

8. In the following discussion of Ivan Karamazov's intellectual rejection of God's world, Berdiaev gives scattered quotations from chapter 3 "The Brothers Become Acquainted," and chapter 4 "Rebellion" of book V of *The Brothers Karamazov*. Ed.

poses the question sharply and radically to Alësha. "Tell me yourself, directly, I call upon you to answer: suppose that you are the one raising an edifice of human destiny, with the goal in the end of making people happy and of finally giving them peace and rest. But in order to achieve that goal, it would be necessary and unavoidable to torture to death just one tiny creature, that same little child who beat on his breast with his little fist, and to found this edifice on his unavenged tears. Would you agree to be the architect on those terms?" Ivan poses that age-old problem about the costs of history, about the admissibility of those sacrifices and sufferings with which the creation of the state and culture is bought. This question, for the most part, is a Russian question, an infernal question which Russian youths posed to universal history. This question contained all Russian moral pathos, torn away from religious sources. The Russian revolutionary nihilist rebellion, which Ivan also proclaims, based itself morally on this question. "In the final analysis, I do not accept this world of God's, and although I know that it exists, I do not want to let it be at all. It is not God that I will not accept, but the world he created, the world of God I do not accept and cannot agree to accept." "Why recognize this damned good and evil when it costs so much? Yes, you know the whole world's consciousness is not worth the tears of this child to dear God." "I renounce the highest harmony entirely. It is not worth the tears of that one tormented child, who beat with its little fist on its breast and prayed in its stinking kennel with its unredeemed tears to 'dear God'. . . . I don't want any more suffering. And if the suffering of children adds to the replenishment of that sum of suffering necessary for the purchase of truth, then I maintain beforehand that all truth is not worth such a price. I do not want harmony, out of love for humanity I don't want it. . . . Yes even harmony is too highly priced, we cannot afford to pay so much to enter into it. And therefore I hasten to return my entry ticket. It is not God that I do not accept, but I only respectfully return my ticket to Him." The theme posed by Ivan Karamazov is complicated, and several motifs are intertwined in it. From the lips of Ivan Karamazov, Dostoevskii pronounces judgment on the positivist theories of progress, and on the utopias of future harmony erected on the sufferings and tears of preceding generations. All human progress, and all its future perfected structures, stand for nothing before the unhappy fate of each man, before the very least of mortals. There is Christian truth in this. But that is certainly not the point of the question posed by Ivan. He poses his question, not as a Christian who believes in the divine meaning of life, but as an atheist and a nihilist who denies the divine sense of life, and who sees only senselessness and injustice from a limited human point of view. This is a rebellion against the divine order of the world, a refusal to accept human fate as defined by Divine Providence. This is a quarrel of man with God, an unwillingness to accept suffering and sacrifice and to comprehend the meaning of our lives as expiation. Ivan Karamazov's entire rebellious train of thought is a manifestation of an extreme rationalism, it is a denial of the secrets

of human destiny that are incomprehensible within the limits and boundaries of this fragment of earthly, empirical life. It is impossible to understand rationally, within the limits of earthly life, why an innocent child was tortured to death. The very posing of such a question is atheistic and godless. Faith in God, and in the Divine order of the world, is faith in the profound, concealed meaning of all the suffering and testing which falls the lot of every being in his earthly pilgrimage. To wipe away the tear of a child and to lighten his suffering is an act of love. But the pathos of Ivan is not love, it is rebellion. He has a false sensitivity, but not love. He rebels because he does not believe in immortality, because for him everything stems from this senseless empirical life filled with suffering and woe. A typical Russian youth, he took Western negative hypotheses as axioms, and believed in atheism.

Ivan Karamazov is a thinker, a metaphysician, and a psychologist, and he gives a profound, philosophical justification to the troubled experiences of countless Russian youths, Russian nihilists and atheists, socialists and anarchists. At the basis of Ivan Karamazov's question lies some kind of false Russian sensitivity and sentimentalism, a false human sympathy driven to a hatred for God and the Divine meaning of earthly life. More often than not, Russians are nihilists and rebels from a false moralism. The Russian makes a case against God because of the little tear of a child, returns his ticket, and denies all values and holy things. He cannot bear suffering, he wants no sacrifice. But, realistically, he does nothing to lessen the tears, he increases the number of tears shed, he makes a revolution which is entirely based on countless tears and sufferings. In the nihilistic moralism of the Russian man, there is no moral stamp of character, no moral severity in the face of the horrors of life, no capacity for sacrifice and the renunciation of arbitrariness. The Russian nihilist-moralist thinks that he loves man and feels more pity for man than God does, that he will correct the design of God for man and the world. An unbelievable pretentiousness is characteristic of this spiritual type. From the case the Russian youths used to make against God, because of the tear of a child and the tears of the people, and out of their elevated conversations in taverns, the ideology of the Russian revolution was born. Atheism and disbelief in immortality lie at its basis. Disbelief in immortality gives birth to false sensitivity and compassion. The endless declamations about the sufferings of the people, about the evils of the state and culture based on those sufferings, flowed from this God-shattering source. The very desire to alleviate the suffering of the people was righteous, and in it the spirit of Christian love might be revealed. This led many into error. They did not notice the mix-up and substitution placed at the base of Russian revolutionary morals, the Antichrist-like temptation of these revolutionary morals of the Russian intelligentsia. Dostoevskii noticed it; he uncovered the spiritual subsoil of nihilism, which concerns itself with the well-being of the people, and he predicted what the triumph of this spirit would lead to. Dostoevskii understood that the great question about the individual fate of

each person is decided far differently in the light of religious consciousness, than in the darkness of revolutionary consciousness, which pretends to be a false religion.

Dostoevskii revealed that the nature of the Russian man is receptive soil for the temptations of Antichrist. And this was the real discovery that also made Dostoevskii the seer and prophet of the Russian revolution. He was granted internal sight and a vision of the spiritual essence of the Russian revolution and Russian revolutionaries. The Russian revolutionaries, apocalypticists and nihilists by their nature, followed the temptations of Antichrist, who wishes to make the people happy, and who must lead the people tempted by him to that revolution which brought a terrible wound to Russia and turned Russian life into hell. The Russian revolutionaries wanted a universal overturn, in which all of the old world, with its evil and darkness and with its sacred places and values, would be consumed. On the ash heap would arise a new life, beneficial for the entire nation and for all nations. The Russian revolutionary does not want to settle for anything less than universal happiness. His consciousness is apocalyptic, he wants the end, the completion, of history, and the beginning of a trans-historical process, in which there would be a kingdom of equality, freedom, and felicity on earth. He allows nothing transitory or relative, no graded development of consciousness. Russian revolutionary maximalism is characteristically perverted apocalypticism. Its reverse side is always nihilism. The nihilistic destruction of the whole plural and relative historical world inevitably extends itself even to the absolute spiritual bases of history. Russian nihilism does not accept the very source of the historical process, which rests in Divine reality. It rebels against the Divine order of the world, in which history is set with its stages, and with its inevitable hierarchy. Dostoevskii himself was tempted by Russian maximalism and Russian religious *narodnichestvo*. But he also had a positive religious force, a prophetic force which enabled him to uncover Russian temptations and expose them. "The Legend of the Grand Inquisitor," told by the Russian atheist Ivan Karamazov, is comparable only to Holy Scripture in its force and depth, and it reveals the inner dialectics of the temptations of Antichrist. The fact that Dostoevskii gave a Catholic guise to the temptations of Antichrist is not essential and must be related to his inadequacies and weaknesses. The spirit of the Grand Inquisitor may appear and act in various guises and forms, it is capable of extreme transformation. And Dostoevskii understood well that the spirit of the Grand Inquisitor has an effect on revolutionary socialism. Revolutionary socialism is not an economic and political teaching, it is not a system of social reform—it pretends to be a religion, it is a faith, a faith antithetical to Christianity.

Following after the Grand Inquisitor, the religion of socialism partakes in all three temptations rejected by Christ in the desert, in the name of freedom of the human spirit. The religion of socialism partakes in the temptation of turning stones into bread, the temptation of the social miracle, and the tempta-

tion of the kingdom of this world. The religion of socialism is not a religion of the free sons of God, it renounces the primacy of man. It is a religion of the slaves of necessity, the children of the earth. The religion of socialism speaks with the words of the Grand Inquisitor: "Everyone will be happy, all the millions of people." "We compel them to work, but in their hours free of work, we organize their lives like children's play, with children's songs, choirs, and innocent dancing. We even allow them sins, they are weak and powerless." "We give them the happiness of feeble beings, as such they were created." The religion of socialism says to the religion of Christ: "You take pride in your chosen ones, but you have only the chosen, while we will comfort all. . . . With us, all will be happy. . . . We will convince them that they will be free only when they give up their freedom."⁹ Like the Grand Inquisitor, the religion of socialism reproaches the religion of Christ for an inadequate love of people. In the name of love of the people, of compassion for the people, in the name of the happiness and well-being of the people on earth, this religion denies the free, god-like nature of man. The religion of the bread of heaven is an aristocratic religion, it is a religion of the chosen, a religion of some "ten thousand great and strong." The religion of the "remaining millions, numerous as the fish in the sea, and weak," is a religion of the bread of the earth. This religion wrote on its banner: "Feed them, and then ask virtues of them." Dostoevskii brilliantly saw through to the spiritual bases of the socialist anthill. He understood, religiously, that socialist collectivism is a false sense of religious community, a false Church that carries within itself the death of the human personality, man's image and likeness to God, and the end of freedom of the human spirit. The most powerful and fiery words were spoken against the religion of socialism by Dostoevskii. And he sensed that for Russians socialism is religion, and not politics, not a social reformation and construction. That the dialectics of the Grand Inquisitor could be applied, and were applied to the religion of socialism by Dostoevskii himself, is evident from the fact that many of his revolutionary characters repeat the train of thought of the Grand Inquisitor. Petr Verkhovenskii says the same thing, and Shigalevism is built on the same basis.¹⁰ These thoughts were also with the hero of *Notes from Underground*, when he spoke about "a gentleman with a mocking and retrograde face," who will subvert all future social well-being, all the well-constructed anthills of the future. And the hero of *Notes from Underground* places the freedom of the human spirit in opposition to this socialistic anthill. Dostoevskii was a religious enemy of socialism, he was an unmasker of the religious

9. From chapter 5 "The Grand Inquisitor," book V of *The Brothers Karamazov*. Ed.

10. Petr Verkhovenskii, a character modeled on the notorious revolutionary, Sergei Nechaev, is at the center of the nihilist conspirators in Dostoevskii's *The Devils*. One of his circle, Shigalev, is the theoretical planner of nightmarish utopias, all in the name of freedom. Ed.

lies and the religious dangers of socialism. He was one of the first to sense the spirit of Antichrist in socialism. He understood that, in socialism, the spirit of Antichrist tempts man with the guise of good and the love of humanity. And he also understood that Russian man, more readily than Western man, follows after this temptation, and is attracted by the dual image of Antichrist, due to his apocalyptic nature. The hostility of Dostoevskii to socialism in no way means that he was a proponent and defender of some kind of "bourgeois" order. He even professed a distinctive Orthodox socialism. But the spirit of Orthodox socialism has nothing in common with the spirit of revolutionary socialism; it was in every way opposed to it. As a *pochvennik* and a Slavophile of sorts, Dostoevskii saw the Russian people as an antidote against the temptations of revolutionary, atheistic socialism. He professed religious *narodnichestvo*. I think that Dostoevskii's entire religiously *narodnik* and *pochvennik* Slavophile ideology was his weak and not his strong side, and it stood in contradiction to his brilliant insights as an artist and a metaphysician. Today, one can even say directly that Dostoevskii was wrong, that the Russian people proved to be no antidote against the temptations of Antichrist in the religion of socialism which the intelligentsia brought to it. The Russian revolution decisively shattered all the illusions of religious *narodnichestvo*, as indeed of all *narodnichestvo*. But the illusions of Dostoevskii himself did not prevent him from revealing the spiritual nature of the Russian religion of socialism, and predicting its consequences. *The Brothers Karamazov* presented the internal dialectics, the metaphysics, of the Russian revolution. *The Devils* presented the image which manifested these dialectics.

Dostoevskii revealed the possession, the frenzy, in the Russian revolutionaries. He sensed that it was not man himself who was active in the revolutionary elements, but the non-human specters who ruled him. When you read through *The Devils*, in these days when the revolution has been realized, you are seized by a strange feeling. It is almost unbelievable how much was fully foreseen and foretold. Long ago, in a small city, in outwardly small proportions, the Russian revolution played itself out; its primary spiritual principles revealed themselves, and its spiritual prototypes were given. The Nechaev affair was the occasion for the plot of *The Devils*. Our left-wing circles at that time saw *The Devils* as a caricature, almost a libel on the revolutionary movement and on revolutionary activists. *The Devils* was included on the *index* of books censored by "progressive" consciousness. It is only possible to understand the entire depth and truth of *The Devils* in the light of a different consciousness, the religious consciousness. This depth and this truth eludes the positivist consciousness. If this novel is viewed as a realistic novel, then much of it is improbable and does not correspond to the reality of that time. But all the novels of Dostoevskii were improbable; they all were written about the depths which cannot be seen on the surface of reality; they were all prophecies. The progressives took prophecy for libel. Today after the experience of the Russian

revolution, even the enemies of Dostoevskii must admit the *The Devils* was a prophetic book. Dostoevskii saw, with a spiritual vision, that the Russian revolution would be this way and could not be otherwise. He foresaw the unavoidability of frenzy in revolution. Russian nihilism, which is present in the *khlyst*-like¹¹ Russian nature, could not help but be a madness, an ecstatic and a frenzied whirl. This ecstatic, frenzied whirl is described in *The Devils*. There it takes place in a small city; today it occurs across the whole immense Russian land. And this frenzied whirl originated in the same spirit, in the same principles, from which it emerged in that little town. Today, the leaders of the Russian revolution announce Russian revolutionary messianism to the world; they bring light from the East to the peoples of the West who reside in "bourgeois" darkness. This Russian revolutionary messianism was revealed and understood by Dostoevskii as the negative of a certain positive, as a perversion of the Apocalypse, as a twisted, inside out, positive Russian messianism, that was not revolutionary, but religious. In one way or another, all the heroes of *The Devils* advocate Russian revolutionary messianism, they are all possessed by this idea. Within the hesitating and bifurcated personality of Shatov, a Slavophile consciousness and a revolutionary consciousness intermix.¹² The Russian revolution is filled with such Shatovs. Just like Dostoevskii's Shatov, they are all prepared to shriek out ecstatically that the Russian revolutionary people are a God-bearing people, but they do not believe in God. Some of them would want to believe in God, but they cannot; most of them satisfy themselves with a belief in the God-bearing revolutionary people. In the typical *narodnik*, Shatov, revolutionary elements are mixed up with reactionary elements, with "Black Hundreds" elements. And this is characteristic. A Shatov can be either extreme left or extreme right, but in either case he remains a lover of the people, a democrat who believes first of all in the people. The Russian revolution is full of such Shatovs; and in none of them can you sort out where their extreme leftism and revolutionism leaves off, and where their extreme rightism and reaction begins. They are always enemies of culture, enemies of truth; they always destroy the freedom of the person. They affirm that Russia is above civilization, and that no law has been written for her. These people are prepared to destroy Russia, in the name of Russian messianism. Dostoevskii had a weakness toward Shatov; he felt Shatov's temptations in himself. But, from the strength of his artistic insight, he made the character of Shatov repulsive and negative.

At the center of revolutionary possession stands the figure of Petr Ver-

11. *Khlyst* here has the double sense of whip—thus a tendency to cruelty and violence—and the name of one of the Russian mystic sects, the *Khlysty* (Flagellants), who had the reputation of working themselves into an ecstatic religious frenzy in their services. *Ed.*

12. Shatov is the character in *The Devils* most like Dostoevskii himself. He breaks with the radicals and tries desperately to build an alternative view on Orthodoxy and the Russian people. *Ed.*

khovenskii. He is also the main demon of the Russian revolution. In the figure of Petr Verkhovenskii, Dostoevskii bared a more profound layer of revolutionary possession, one that is concealed and invisible in reality. Petr Verkhovenskii might have a more attractive appearance, but Dostoevskii tore off the coverings and revealed his soul. Then the image of revolutionary possession stood in all its ugliness. He shakes in his entirety from demonic possession, drawing everyone into the frenzied whirl. Everywhere he is at the center, he is behind everyone and for everyone. He is the demon who enters everyone, and who possesses everyone. But he himself is possessed. Petr Verkhovenskii is before all else a man completely emptied, he had no content. The demons completely mastered him, and made him their obedient instrument. He ceased to exist in the image and likeness of God, even the human countenance was lost in him. Possession by a false idea made Petr Verkhovenskii a moral idiot. He was possessed by the idea of universal transformation, universal revolution; he gave himself up to tempting lies, allowed demons to rule his soul, and lost the elementary distinction between good and evil. He lost his spiritual center. In the figure of Petr Verkhovenskii, we encounter a personality that has already disintegrated, in which it is impossible to find anything ontological. He is entirely lie and deceit; he leads all into deceit and plunges into the kingdom of lies. Evil is a falsification of life, a false existence, a non-existence. Dostoevskii showed how a false idea, which had completely seized a man and led him to possession, led him to non-existence, to the disintegration of personality. Dostoevskii was a great master in the revelation of the ontological consequences of false ideas that entirely master a man. Exactly what idea entirely mastered Petr Verkhovenskii and drove his personality to disintegration, what turned him into a liar and a disseminator of lies? It was that very same basic idea of Russian nihilism, Russian socialism, and Russian maximalism. It was that very same infernal passion for universal levelling, that very same rebellion against God in the name of the universal happiness of the people, that very same replacement of the kingdom of Christ by the kingdom of Antichrist. There are many such Verkhovenskiis in the Russian revolution, everywhere they try to draw people into a diabolical whirlwind of motion. They saturate the Russian people with falsehood and draw them into non-being. These Verkhovenskiis are not always recognized, not everyone is able to look into the depths, behind the external cover. The Khlestakovs of the revolution are easier to recognize than the Verkhovenskiis, but not everyone recognizes even these, and the crowd raises them up and crowns them with glory.

Dostoevskii foresaw that the revolution in Russia would be dismal, terrible, and dark, that it would include no rebirth of the people. He knew that Fed'ka the convict would play no small role in it, and that Shigalevism would triumph in it. Long before, Petr Verkhovenskii had already revealed the value of Fed'ka the convict for the cause of the Russian revolution. And the whole creative ideology of the Russian revolution is an ideology of Shigalevism. It is

terrifying in our day to read the words of Verkhovenskiĭ: "In essence our teaching is a denial of honor, it is by means of an unconcealed right of dishonor that one can most easily attract the Russian man." And the answer of Stavrogin:¹³ "The right to dishonor—indeed, this will attract everyone to us, no one will hold back!" The Russian revolution proclaimed "the right to dishonor" and everyone followed after it. And here are the no less important words: "Socialism spreads here mainly out of sentimentalism." Dishonor and sentimentalism—are the basic principles of Russian socialism. These principles, perceived by Dostoevskii, also triumph in revolution. Petr Verkhorenskii saw what role "pure crooks" would play in revolution. "Well, they are, perhaps, good people, sometimes very useful, but they take up a lot of time and require constant surveillance." And P. Verkhovenskiĭ reflects further about the factors of the Russian revolution: "The most significant force—the cement which binds all together, is shame of one's own opinion. What a force this is! And who did the work, who was the 'dear fellow' who labored so that no one any longer had a single idea of his own in his head! People revere out of their shame." This was a very deep insight into revolutionary Russia. In Russian revolutionary thought, there was always "shame of one's own opinion." We honored this shame as collective consciousness, a consciousness higher than personal consciousness. In the Russian revolution, ultimately any individual thought was extinguished, thought became completely impersonal, mass thought. Read the revolutionary papers, listen to the revolutionary speeches, and you will get confirmation of the words of Petr Verkhovenskiĭ. Someone labored so much that "no one retains a single idea of his own in his head." Russian revolutionary messianism offers its own ideas and views to the bourgeois West. In Russia, everything must be collective, mass, impersonal. Russian revolutionary messianism is Shigalevism. Shigalevism moves and rules the Russian revolution.

"Shigalev looked as though he expected the destruction of the world, not as something prophesied which might not even take place, but as something very definite, on the day after tomorrow exactly at twenty-five minutes of eleven." All Russian revolutionary maximalists looked the way Shigalev looked, all expect the destruction of the world on the day after tomorrow. And the new world which will arise on the ruins of the old world is a world of Shigalevism. "Departing from unlimited freedom," says Shigalev, "I arrive at unlimited despotism. I add, however, that there can be no other postulation of the social formula than my own." All revolutionary Shigalevs talk and act that way. Petr Verkhovenskiĭ formulates the essence of Shigalevism to Stavrogin thus: "To equalize misfortune is a good thought, not an absurd thought. Education is not necessary, enough of science! Even without science there is enough material for a thousand years, but it is necessary to create obedience. . . . The craving

13. Stavrogin, the mysterious character in *The Devils*, exerts a powerful influence over all around him, and from his own amorality is capable of the foulest deeds. *Ed.*

for education is already an aristocratic craving. A little bit of family or love, and one has a desire for property. We will kill desire; we will allow drunkenness, tattling, informing; we will allow unheard of depravity; we will suppress all genius in infancy. Everyone to a common denominator, to full equality. Only the bare minimum is necessary—that is the motto of the world from now on. But convulsions are also necessary; we, the rulers, are concerned about this. Slaves must have rulers. Complete obedience, complete impersonality, but once in thirty years Shigalev also allows a convulsion, and everyone suddenly begins to consume one another, to a certain extent, simply to avoid boredom. Boredom is an aristocratic sensation.” In these words, astounding in their prophetic power, through the lips of P. Verkhovenskiĭ, Dostoevskii directs everything toward the train of thought of the Grand Inquisitor. This shows that in the “Legend of the Grand Inquisitor,” Dostoevskii, to a significant degree, had socialism in mind. Dostoevskii unmasks all the illusoriness of democracy in revolution. No democracy exists; a tyrannical minority rules. But this tyranny, unheard of in the history of the world, will be based on universal forced equality. Shigalevism is a frenzied passion for equality, leading to the end, to the limit, to non-existence. Boundless social daydreaming leads to a destruction of existence with all of its riches; among fanatics it transforms itself into evil. Social daydreaming is not at all an innocent thing. This Dostoevskii understood. Russian revolutionary socialist dreaminess is also Shigalevism. In the name of equality, this daydreaming would have wanted to destroy God and God’s world. In that tyranny, and in that absolute equality with which the “development and deepening” of the Russian revolution was crowned, the golden dreams and daydreams of the Russian revolutionary intelligentsia were manifest. These were the dreams and the daydreams of the kingdom of Shigalevism. To many it seemed more attractive than it appeared in reality. Many naive and simple-minded Russian socialists, who dreamt of social revolution, are confused by the triumphant calls: “Each belongs to everyone, and all belong to each. All are slaves and are equal in poverty. . . . First it is a matter of reducing the level of education, science and talent. The higher levels of science and talent can only be reached by persons of high ability, persons of high ability are not necessary!” Dostoevskii was more penetrating than the professed teachers of the Russian intelligentsia. He knew that Russian revolutionism, Russian socialism in the hour of its triumph, would have to end with these Shigalev-like cries.

Dostoevskii foresaw the triumph, not only of Shigalevism, but also of Smerdiakovism.¹⁴ He knew that there would arise in Russia lackeys who would

14. Smerdiakov, the lackey half-brother of *The Brothers Karamazov*, here and elsewhere in these essays represents low-mindedness and the capacity for destructive action. Under the influence of misguided rationalism, supplied by Ivan Karamazov, he became the murderer of his father, just as, in the minds of these authors, the Russian people led astray by the teachings of the intelligentsia destroyed the fatherland. *Ed.*

say even in an hour of great danger for our native land: "I hate all of Russia," "I not only do not want to be a soldier, but on the contrary I desire the destruction of all soldiers." To the question: "But when an enemy comes, who will protect us?" the rebellious lackey answered: "In 1812 there was the great invasion of the French Emperor Napoleon I, and it would have been well if those same French had subdued us then. An intelligent nation would have completely conquered a foolish one, and united it to itself. There would have been a completely different order of things." Defeatism in time of war was just such a case of Smerdiakovism. Smerdiakovism also led to the fact that an intelligent nation, Germany, now conquers a "foolish nation," Russia. The lackey Smerdiakov was one of our first internationalists, and all our internationalism received an injection of Smerdiakov. Smerdiakov displayed the right of dishonor, and many followed after him. How profound of Dostoevskii that Smerdiakov be the other half of Ivan Karamazov, his opposite likeness. Ivan Karamazov and Smerdiakov are two manifestations of Russian nihilism, two sides of one and the same essence. Ivan Karamazov is the higher, philosophical manifestation of nihilism; Smerdiakov its lower, lackey-like manifestation. Ivan Karamazov, on the heights of intellectual life, must give birth to Smerdiakov, in the lower depths of life. Smerdiakov also manifests the entire atheistic dialectics of Ivan Karamazov. Smerdiakov is the inner bark of Ivan. In any mass of humanity, in any popular mass, there are more Smerdiakovs than Ivans. And in revolution as a mass movement, the number of Smerdiakovs is greater than the number of Ivans. In revolution, the atheistic dialectics of Ivan Karamazov triumph, but Smerdiakov realizes them. He puts into practice the conclusion that "all is permitted." Ivan commits sins of thought, of the spirit; Smerdiakov commits them in the deed, he fulfills Ivan's idea. Ivan commits parricide in thought; Smerdiakov commits parricide in fact, in the deed itself. Atheistic revolution always commits parricide, it always denies its patronymic, and it always severs the link between son and father. And it justifies this crime with the fact that the father was very foolish and sinful. Such a murderous relation to the father is always Smerdiakovism. Smerdiakovism is also the final manifestation of boorishness. Having committed in fact what Ivan committed in thought, Smerdiakov asks Ivan, "Then you always used to say that all is permitted, so why are you so upset about it now?" This question of Smerdiakov to Ivan is repeated also in the Russian revolution. The Smerdiakovs of the revolution, having manifested in fact Ivan's principle that "all is permitted," have the grounds to ask the Ivans of the revolution: "Why are you so upset about it now?" Dostoevskii predicted that Smerdiakov would come to hate Ivan, who had taught him atheism and nihilism. And this is played out in our day between the "people" and the "intelligentsia." The entire tragedy between Ivan and Smerdiakov was a distinctive symbol that revealed the tragedy of the Russian revolution. The problem about whether all was permitted for the triumph of the good of humanity had already confronted Ras-

kol'nikov.¹⁵ Father Zosima¹⁶ says: "In truth, they have more dreamlike fantasy than we! They want to make just arrangements but, denying Christ, they end by deluging the world in blood, for blood calls for blood, and those who live by the sword, die by the sword. And, were there not the promise of Christ, they would destroy each other, even up to the last two men on earth." These words were prophetic.

"People unite in order to take from life all that it can give, but certainly for happiness and joy only in this present world. The man who will exalt himself with the spirit of godly titanic pride, also will appear as man-God. . . . Everyone will know that he is entirely mortal, without resurrection, and that he will accept death proudly and quietly, like a god. Out of pride, he will realize that there is no point in grumbling because life is so brief, and he will love his brother then without any kind of reward. Love will satisfy only an instant of life, but the very consciousness of its brevity will strengthen its fire as much as it once spread in hopes of love beyond the grave and eternal." The devil said this to Ivan, and these words reveal a thought which tormented Dostoevskii, that love of people may be godless and characterized by Antichrist. This kind of love lies at the basis of revolutionary socialism. The image of this godless socialism, grounded in Antichrist's love, is brought before Versilov. "I imagine that the battle has already ended and the struggle has subsided. After the curses, mud throwing and whistles had quieted, the people remained alone, as they had wanted. Their former great idea left them. The great source of strength, which up to that time nourished and warmed them, was going, but this already resembled the last day of mankind. And people suddenly realized that they remained completely alone, and at once they felt a great sense of being orphaned. . . . People thus orphaned would begin to nestle up to each other, all the more closely and lovingly; they would grasp for each other's hands realizing that now they have only each other! The great idea of immortality would disappear and it would be necessary to put something in its place. . . . In that measure, to the degree that they became conscious of their own transitoriness and finitude, they would love earth and life unrestrainedly, and very specially, different from their former love. . . . They would awaken and rush to kiss each other, hastening to love, knowing that their days are short and that these are all they have left. They would work for each other, and each would give his fortune to all, and in so doing each would be happy."¹⁷ This fantasy reveals the metaphysics and psychology of godless socialism. Dostoev-

15. Raskol'nikov, in *Crime and Punishment*, tested to find out whether he was one of those to whom "all was permitted" by the axe murder of an old money-lender who, in his mind, did not deserve to live. *Ed.*

16. Father Zosima, Dostoevskii's answer to the atheistic rationalism of Ivan, is portrayed in book VI "The Russian Monk" of *The Brothers Karamazov*. *Ed.*

17. From *A Raw Youth*, part 3, chapter 7, III. Versilov is a "double" character who finally experiences the triumph of goodness in his soul. *Ed.*

skii painted a vivid picture of Antichrist-like love. He understood, as no one else, that the spiritual basis of socialism is a denial of immortality, that the pathos of socialism is the desire to build the kingdom of God on earth, without God, and to realize love between people, without Christ—the source of love. Thus he revealed the religious falsehood of humanism in its extreme manifestation. Humanistic socialism leads to the destruction of man as made in the image and likeness of God. It is directed against the freedom of the human spirit, it will not bear the test of freedom. Dostoevskii, with an acuteness never before achieved, posed a religious question about man, and juxtaposed it to a question about socialism, about the earthly union and organization of people. This revealed to him how Christ and Antichrist met and mixed in the soul of the Russian man, and of the Russian people. The apocalypticism of the Russian people also made this meeting and this mixing especially acute and tragic. Dostoevskii had a presentiment that if a revolution took place in Russia, it would manifest the dialectics of Antichrist. Russian socialism would be apocalyptic antithetical to Christianity. Dostoevskii saw further and deeper than anyone else. But he was not free himself from Russian *narodnik* illusions. There were aspects of his Russian Christianity that gave K. Leont'ev grounds to call it rosy Christianity. This rosy Christianity and rosy *narodnichestvo* is proclaimed most of all in the characters of Zosima and Alësha, who cannot be called entirely successful. The great positive revelations of Dostoevskii were presented in a negative way, by means of negative artistic dialectics. The truth he spoke about Russia is not the sickly-sweet and rosy truth of love of the people and reverence before the people. It is a tragic truth, a truth about the Antichrist-like temptations of a people which is apocalyptic in its soul. Dostoevskii himself was tempted by that church nationalism which prevented the Russian people from entering into the ecumenical breadth. . . . Dostoevskii's reverence for the people suffered failure in the Russian revolution. His positive prophecy did not take place. But his prophetic insights into Russian temptations did triumph.

III. *L. Tolstoi in the Russian Revolution*

There is nothing prophetic in Tolstoi; he had no prior vision and he predicted nothing. As an artist, he turned to a crystallized past. He did not have sensitivity to the dynamism of human nature, which Dostoevskii had to such a high degree. But in the Russian revolution, it was not the artistic insights of Tolstoi that triumphed, but his moral judgments. L. Tolstoi, as a seeker of the truth of life and as a moralist and as a religious teacher, is very characteristic of Russia and the Russians. Tolstoians, in the narrow sense of the word who share the doctrine of Tolstoi, are few, and they represent an insignificant phenomenon. But Tolstoism, in the broad, not doctrinal, sense of the word, is very characteristic of Russian man, it determines Russian moral judgments.

Tolstoi was not a direct teacher of the Russian left-wing intelligentsia; they were foreign to Tolstoi's religious teachings. But Tolstoi perceived and expressed the particularities of the moral mentality of a large part of the Russian intelligentsia, perhaps even of Russian man in general. And the Russian revolution, in a way, is a triumph of Tolstoism. Both Tolstoian moralism and Russian amorality left their marks on it. This Russian moralism and this Russian amorality are mutually connected, and are two sides of one and the same illness of moral consciousness. I see the illness of Russian moral consciousness first of all in the denial of personal moral responsibility and personal moral discipline, in the weak development of a feeling of obligation and a feeling of honor, and in the absence of a realization of the moral value of the choice of personal qualities. The Russian man does not feel himself morally responsible in sufficient degree, and he has too little respect for these qualities in the individual. This is related to the fact that the individual feels himself immersed in the collective, the individual is not yet sufficiently open and conscious. Such a condition of moral consciousness gives birth to a whole series of claims directed at fate, at history, at authority, and at cultural values which are inaccessible for the given individual. The moral attitude of Russian man is characterized, not by healthy responsibilities, but by sick pretensions. Russian man does not feel the indissoluble link between rights and responsibilities, in him both the consciousness of rights and responsibilities are obscured. He is buried in irresponsible collectivism, in claims on behalf of everybody. It is most difficult of all for Russian man to feel that he is himself the forger of his fate. He does not like qualities which elevate the life of the individual, he does not like strength. Any strength which elevates life appears to Russian man as morally suspicious, as evil rather than good. Also linked to these peculiarities of moral consciousness, is the fact that Russian man places cultural values under moral suspicion. He poses a whole series of moral claims to all higher culture, and he feels no moral obligation to create culture. All these peculiarities and illnesses of the Russian moral consciousness are favorable for the rise of Tolstoi's teachings.

Tolstoi is an individualist, and a very extreme individualist. He is completely antisocial, for him there is no problem of society. Tolstoian morality is also individualistic. But it would be wrong to draw the conclusion from this that Tolstoian morality rests on a clear and firm recognition of individuality. Tolstoian individualism is decidedly hostile to the individual, as individualism always is. Tolstoi does not see the human face, he does not know that face. He is completely submerged in natural collectivism, which appears to him as the divine life. The life of the individual does not appear to him as the truly divine life, it is a false life of this world. The truly divine life is a faceless life, a common life in which all qualities of distinction, all hierarchical intervals have disappeared. The moral consciousness of Tolstoi requires that man no longer exist as a unique being possessing his own qualities, but that there be only a universal godliness without qualities, an equality of each and all in an impersonal godliness. Only the total dissolution of all personal and multifarious existence

into a featureless, qualityless universality appears to Tolstoi as the fulfillment of the law of the Lord of life. Personhood, the possession of qualities, is already sin and evil. And, consequently, Tolstoi would destroy everything that is associated with the individual and the possession of qualities. There is an Eastern, Buddhist mood in him that is hostile to the Christianity of the West. Tolstoi becomes a nihilist out of moralistic zeal. Truly demonic, his moralism also destroys all the richness of existence. The egalitarian and nihilistic passion of Tolstoi draws him to the destruction of all spiritual realities, of all that which is genuinely ontological. The unlimited, moralistic claim of Tolstoi makes everything illusory; it places under suspicion and overthrows the reality of history, the reality of the Church, the reality of the state, the reality of nationality, the reality of the individual, and the reality of all suprapersonal values, in sum, the reality of all spiritual life.

Everything appeared to Tolstoi as morally reprehensible and unallowable, as founded on victims and sufferings towards which he feels a purely animal fear. I do not know of any other genius in world history who would be so foreign to any kind of spiritual life. He is entirely submerged in the life of the spirit made flesh—the animal life. And the entire religion of Tolstoi is a demand for such universal, submissive animality, liberated from suffering and gratified. I know of no one in the Christian world to whom the very idea of redemption would have been so foreign and contrary, and the mystery of Golgotha so hard to understand, as Tolstoi. In the name of a happy animal life for all, he rejected the individual and rejected all suprapersonal value. But, in truth, the individual and suprapersonal values are indissolubly linked. The individual only exists because he has a suprapersonal content of value, and because he belongs to the hierarchical world in which qualitative distinctions and intervals exist. The nature of the individual does not tolerate confusion and non-qualitative equality. And the love of people in Christ is, least of all, such a confusion and non-qualitative equality, but it is an infinitely profound, penetrating affirmation of any human image in God. Tolstoi did not know this, and his morality was a base morality, the demanding morality of a nihilist. The morality of Nietzsche was infinitely higher and more spiritual, than the morality of Tolstoi. The loftiness of Tolstoian morality is a great deception which must be destroyed. Tolstoi prevented the birth and development of the morally responsible individual in Russia; he hindered the choice of personal qualities, and therefore he was the evil genius of Russia, her tempter. In him, the fatal meeting of Russian moralism and Russian nihilism took place, and a religious-moral justification of Russian nihilism was given, by which many were tempted. In him, Russian *narodnichestvo*, so fatal for the destiny of Russia, received its religious expression and moral justification. Almost all the Russian intelligentsia recognized Tolstoian moral judgments to be the highest attainable by man. They even considered these moral judgments too high, and therefore they considered themselves unworthy of them and incapable of reaching their heights. But few doubted the loftiness of Tolstoian moral consciousness. At

the same time, this acceptance of Tolstoian moral consciousness has as its consequence, pogrom and the destruction of the greatest holy objects and values, the greatest spiritual realities, the death of the individual, and the death of God who was reduced to an impersonal neutered divinity. We do not yet relate to these tempting lies of Tolstoian morality with sufficient seriousness and depth. The antidote against it would have had to be the prophetic insights of Dostoevskii. Tolstoian morality triumphed in the Russian revolution, but not by those idyllic and loving paths which Tolstoi himself took. Tolstoi himself probably would have been horrified by this fulfillment of his moral judgments. But he wanted much, too much, of that which now occurs. He evoked those specters which rule the revolution, and he himself was possessed by them.

Tolstoi was a maximalist. He rejected all historical continuity, and he did not want to allow any stages in historical development. This Tolstoian maximalism manifests itself in the Russian revolution—it is animated by the demands of moral maximalism, it breathes a hatred for everything historical. And, in the spirit of Tolstoian maximalism, the Russian revolution would want to tear each man from the world and the historical whole to which he organically belongs, to reduce him to atoms in order to plunge him quickly into an impersonal collective. Tolstoi denied history and historical tasks, he renounced the great historical past, and he did not want a great historical future. In this, the Russian revolution is true to him, it accomplishes a denial of the historical testament of the past and the historical tasks of the future. It would have preferred that the Russian people did not live a historical life. And just as with Tolstoi, the Russian revolution's maximalist denial of the historical world was born out of a frenzied egalitarian passion. Let there be absolute equality, even though it would be equality in non-being. The historical world is hierarchical, it consists entirely of stages, it is complicated and many-faceted. In it are distinctions and distances, in it are varied qualities and the character of differentiation. All of this is as hateful to the Russian revolution as to Tolstoi. The revolution would like to make the historical world gray, homogeneous, simplified, deprived of all qualities and all colors. And Tolstoi taught this as the highest truth. The historical world is broken down into atoms, and the atoms necessarily are reunited into an impersonal collective. "No annexations or indemnities"¹⁸ is also an abstract negation of all positive historical tasks. For, in fact, all historical tasks assume "annexations and indemnities," assume the struggle of concrete, historical individuals, and assume the building up and breaking down of historical wholes, the thriving and fading of historical entities.

Tolstoi managed to inoculate the Russian intelligentsia with a hatred of everything historically individual and everything historically diverse. He was the expression of that side of the Russian nature which sustained an aversion to historical power and historical glory. He taught us to moralize over history,

18. "No annexations or indemnities" was the slogan of those international socialists who sought an end to the war without a victory going to either side. *Ed.*

in an elementary and simplified way, and to transfer over to historical life the moral categories of individual life. In doing this, he morally undermined the possibility that the Russian people could live a historical life, and fulfill its historical fate and its historical mission. Morally, he paved the way for the historical suicide of the Russian people. He clipped the wings of the Russian people as a historical people, and morally poisoned the sources of every impulse to historical creation. The world war was lost by Russia because the Tolstoian evaluation of war prevailed in it. In addition to betrayal and animal egoism, it was Tolstoian moral judgments that weakened the Russian people in the terrible hour of world conflict. Tolstoian morality disarmed Russia, and delivered her into the hands of the enemy. And this Tolstoian non-resistance, this Tolstoian passivity, lures and captivates those who sing hymns to the historical suicide of the Russian people accomplished by the revolution. Tolstoi also was the representative of the non-resisting and passive side of the Russian national character. Tolstoian morality weakened the Russian people, took away its courage in a severe historical struggle, but it left the untransformed animal nature of man with its most elementary instincts. It killed the instincts of power and glory in the Russian breed, but it left the instincts of egoism, envy, and outrage. This morality is powerless to transform human nature, but it may weaken human nature, tone it down, and undermine its creative instincts.

Tolstoi was an extreme anarchist, an enemy of all statehood on moral and idealistic grounds. He repudiated the state, as founded on sacrifice and suffering, and saw in it the source of evil, which for him came down to coercion. Tolstoian anarchism, Tolstoian hostility to the state, also gained a victory in the Russian people. Tolstoi proved to be an expression of the antistate, anarchistic instincts of the Russian people. He gave a moral and religious sanction to these instincts. And he is one of the culprits of the destruction of the Russian state. Tolstoi was also hostile to any culture. Culture for him was based on injustice and coercion; it was the source of all evil in our lives. Man, by his nature, is naturally good and benevolent, and inclined to live according to the law of the Lord of life. The rise of culture, just like the rise of the state, was a fall, a falling away from a natural divine order, the beginning of evil and coercion. The feeling of original sin, the radical evil of human nature, was completely foreign to Tolstoi, and therefore he had no need of religious redemption and did not understand it. He was deprived of a sense of evil, because he was deprived of a sense of the freedom and uniqueness of human nature. He did not experience the individual. He was submerged in impersonal, inhuman nature, and in it he sought the sources of divine justice. In this, Tolstoi proved to be the source of the entire philosophy of the Russian revolution. The Russian revolution is hostile to culture, it wants to return to a natural condition of national life, in which it sees immediate truth and goodness. The Russian revolution would like to abolish our entire cultural stratum, to submerge it in the natural darkness of the people. And Tolstoi is one of those guilty of the destruction of Russian culture. He morally undermined the possibility of cul-

tural creation and poisoned the springs of creativity. He poisoned Russian man with a moral reflection which made him powerless and incapable of historical and cultural activity. Tolstoi was a real poisoner of the wells of life. Tolstoian moral reflection is a real poison, a venom which levels any creative energy, and which undermines life. This moral reflection has nothing in common with the Christian sense of sin and the Christian need of repentance. For Tolstoi, there is neither sin nor repentance which regenerates human nature. For him, there is only the enervating and injurious reflection which is the reverse side of the revolt against the divine order of the world. Tolstoi idealized the common people; he saw in them the source of truth; and he deified physical labor in which he sought salvation from the absurdity of life. But he had a disdainful and negative attitude toward any spiritual work and creation. All of Tolstoi's sharp criticisms were always directed against the cultural order. These Tolstoian evaluations also conquered in the Russian revolution, which raises to the heights the representatives of physical labor and denigrates representatives of spiritual labor. Tolstoian *narodnichestvo*, and Tolstoian repudiation of the division of labor, rest at the basis of the moral judgments of the revolution, if one may even speak of its moral judgments. In truth, Tolstoi had no less significance for the Russian revolution than Rousseau had for the French Revolution. It is also true that coercion and bloodletting would have horrified Tolstoi; he imagined the realization of his ideas in other ways. But, you know, Rousseau would also have been horrified by the actions of Robespierre and the revolutionary terror. All the same, Rousseau bears responsibility for the French Revolution, just as Tolstoi bears responsibility for the Russian revolution. I even think that the teaching of Tolstoi was more destructive than the teaching of Rousseau. It was Tolstoi who made the existence of a great Russia morally impossible. He did much for the destruction of Great Russia. But in this suicidal affair he was Russian, fatal and unfortunate Russian characteristics expressed themselves in him. Tolstoi was one of the Russian temptations.

Tolstoism, in the broadest sense of the word, is an internal Russian danger which took on the appearance of the highest good. And only this tempting and false good, this pseudo-good, this idea of holiness without grace, this pseudo-holiness, was able to shatter inner Russian strength. In the teaching of Tolstoism, the temptation is the radical call to perfection, to a perfect fulfillment of the law of good. But, because this perfection of Tolstoism is so destructive, so nihilistic, so hostile to all values, so incompatible with any kind of creativity, it is perfection without grace. In the holiness toward which Tolstoi strove, there was a terrible gracelessness, an abandonment of God, and therefore it was a false, evil holiness. Worthwhile holiness could not achieve such destruction, nor be so nihilistic. Among genuine saints there was the blessing of life, there was grace. This blessing and this grace were first of all with Christ. In the spirit of Tolstoi, there was nothing of the spirit of Christ. Tolstoi demands immediate and full realization of the absolute, of absolute good in this earthly life, which is subject to the law of sinful nature. He does

not allow the relative; he destroys everything relative. Thus, he wanted to pull every human being out of the earthly whole and plunge him down in the desert, in the non-being of the negative absolute. And absolute life proves to be only elementary animal life, which passes in physical labor and in the satisfaction of the most simple needs. The Russian revolution also wishes to plunge all of Russia, and all of the Russian people, into just such a negative, absolute, empty, and nihilistic state. The ideal of perfection without grace leads to nihilism. Denial of the rights of the relative, that is denial of all of life's multifacetedness and of all the stages of history, in the final analysis, departs from the sources of absolute life, from absolute spirit. The religious genius, the Apostle Paul, in former times understood all of the danger of the transformation of Christianity into a Jewish apocalyptic sect, and brought Christianity into the flow of universal history by admitting and consecrating the truth of relative stages. Tolstoi, first of all, rose up against the act of the Apostle Paul. Every lie and illusion of Tolstoism, with an inevitable dialectic, displayed itself in the Russian revolution. In revolution, a people lives out its temptations, its errors and its false values. Many are taught thereby, but the teaching is bought at too dear a price. One must liberate oneself from Tolstoi as a moral teacher. The overcoming of Tolstoism is the spiritual recovery of Russia, its return from death to life, to the possibility of creation, to the possibility of fulfilling its mission in the world.

IV. *Conclusion*

Russian man is inclined to experience everything transcendently, but not immanently. And this can easily be a slavish condition of his spirit. In any case, it is an indication of insufficient spiritual maturity. Most of the Russian intelligentsia never recognized the state, the Church, the fatherland, and the higher spiritual life as immanent. All these values seemed to it to be transcendental and distant, and they aroused a hostile feeling in it, as if they were something strange and coercive. The Russian intelligentsia never experienced history and historical fate as immanent in itself, as its own affair, and, therefore, it conducted a trial against history, as if history were a force that operated apart from itself. Transcendental experiences in the masses were accompanied by a feeling of religious reverence and submission. With that, the existence of Great Russia was possible. But this transcendental experience never turned into an immanent experience of holy things and values. Everything remained transcendental, but now it evokes towards itself, not a reverent and submissive attitude, but a nihilistic and rebellious one. Revolution is that unhealthy and catastrophic passage from a reverential respect for the transcendental to a nihilistic rebellion against the transcendental. Immanent spiritual maturity and liberation are not attained in revolutions. Too many people saw the approach of spiritual maturity in the immanent morals and immanent religion of L. Tolstoi. But this was

a terrible deception. In reality, the immanent consciousness of Tolstoi was the nihilistic denial of all those holy things and values which earlier were considered transcendental. But this is only a return to primordial slavery. Such a revolt is always a slave's revolt; it contains no freedom or concept of man as the son of God. Russian nihilism is that incapacity to experience, immanently and freely, all the richness and values of God's world. It is the inability of persons to perceive themselves as the sons of God, and as the possessors of the heritage of universal and national history. Russian apocalypticism is often flushed with the expectation of a miracle, which should put an end to this life of estrangement from all riches, and overcome the unhealthy transcendental breach. For that reason, immanent creative development was so difficult for Russians; their sense of historical continuity was so weak. There is a kind of inner sickness of the Russian soul. This sickness has grave negative consequences, but it also reveals something positive, something not attainable by Western people of a more immanent stamp. The great Russian writers revealed those abysses and limits which were concealed for Western people, who were more limited and bound by their immanent spiritual discipline. The Russian soul was more sensitive to mystical tendencies, it had contact with specters that were concealed for reserved Western souls. And the Russian soul easily succumbs to temptation, it easily lapses into confusion and accepts substitution. It is not by chance that the presentiment of Antichrist was predominantly a Russian presentiment. The sense of Antichrist and the fear of Antichrist were in the Russian people, both in the lower classes and in Russian writers of the very heights of spiritual life. And the spirit of Antichrist tempted Russians, as it had never tempted peoples of the West. Catholicism always had a strong sense of evil and the diabolical, but almost never the sense of Antichrist. The Catholic soul presented a fortress, protected from the tendencies and temptations of Antichrist. Orthodoxy did not turn the soul into that kind of fortress; it left the soul more open. But the apocalypse is experienced by the Russian soul passively, not actively. There were no active weapons for struggle with the spirits of Antichrist; these weapons were not prepared. There was no armor, no shield or sword, there was no knightly temper of the soul. The Russian struggle with Antichrist is always a withdrawal, an experience of horror. And too many persons who did not withdraw from temptation, yielded to this temptation. They became confused, and were captivated by a substitution. Russian man found himself in the power of false morals, of the false ideal of the just, perfected, holy life, which weakened him in the struggle with temptations. Dostoevskii unmasked this false morality and false holiness, and predicted their consequences, while Tolstoi preached them.

Russian revolutionary morality presents an utterly distinctive phenomenon. It formed and crystallized in the left-wing Russian intelligentsia, in the course of several decades, and gained prestige and fascination in broad circles of Russian society. The average intelligent Russian man got used to bowing before the moral figures of revolutionaries, and before their revolutionary morality.

He was prepared to consider himself unworthy of this moral eminence of the revolutionary type. In Russia, a special cult of revolutionary holiness arose. This cult had its saints, its holy legends, its dogmas. And for a long time any doubt in these holy legends, any kind of criticism of these dogmas, any kind of disrespectful attitude toward these saints, led to excommunication, not only on the part of revolutionary public opinion, but also on the part of radical and liberal public opinion. Dostoevskii fell victim to this excommunication, for he was the first to have revealed the lie and the substitution in revolutionary holiness. He understood that revolutionary moralism has as its reverse side revolutionary amorality, and that the similarity of revolutionary holiness and Christian holiness is like the deceptive similarity of Christ and Antichrist. The moral degeneration with which the revolution of 1905 ended inflicted a certain blow to the prestige of revolutionary morality, and the halo of revolutionary holiness faded. But, in fact, the recovery for which some hoped did not take place. The illness of Russian moral consciousness was too extended and serious. Recovery can take place only after a terrible crisis, when the entire organism of the Russian people is close to death. We live in the days of this almost fatal crisis. Today, even for people who are half blind, things are much more obvious than after 1905. Today, *Signposts* would not be greeted with such hostility among broad circles of the Russian intelligentsia, as when it first appeared. Today even those who reviled it are beginning to recognize the truth of *Signposts*. After the demonism of the revolution, the holiness of the Russian revolutionary intelligentsia no longer appears canonically so beyond dispute. The spiritual recovery of Russia must be sought in the inner destruction of this revolutionary pseudo-holiness, and in liberation from its fascination. Revolutionary holiness is not genuine holiness; it is false holiness, the deceiving appearance of holiness, a substitution. External persecution carried on by the old authorities against the revolutionaries, the external suffering they had to endure, contributed very much to this deceptive appearance of holiness. But never in revolutionary holiness did any true transformation of human nature take place, no second spiritual birth, no victory over internal evil and sin. Never was the task of transformation of human nature even proposed in it. Human nature remained as of old; it remained in slavery to sin and other passions, and it wanted to achieve a new, higher life by purely external, material means. But man, made fanatic by a false idea, is able to bear external privations, need, and sufferings. He may become an ascetic, not because he overcomes his sinful and slavish nature with the force of his spirit, but because possession of one idea, one goal, crowds out of him all the richness and multi-facetedness of existence, and impoverishes his nature. This is graceless asceticism, and graceless poverty; it is nihilistic asceticism and nihilistic poverty. Traditional revolutionary holiness is godless holiness. It is the godless pretense that one can achieve holiness by man alone, and in the name of humanity alone. On these paths, the image of man becomes crippled and falls, for the image of man is the image and likeness of God. Revolutionary morality and revolution-

ary holiness are deeply antithetical to Christianity. This morality and this holiness claim to substitute for and replace Christianity, with its faith in the concept of man as the son of God, and its faith in the gift of grace acquired by man through Christ, the Redeemer. Revolutionary morality is just as hostile to Christianity as is the morality of Tolstoi—one and the same lie and substitution poisons and weakens both of them. The deceptive appearance of revolutionary holiness was sent to the Russian people as a temptation, and as a trial of its spiritual strength. And Russians could not pass this trial. Truly captivated by the revolutionary spirit, they did not see reality, they did not recognize the specters. Deceptive, false, and double images are captivating and tempting. The temptation of Antichrist, the morality of Antichrist, and the holiness of Antichrist captivate and attract the Russian man. For Russians, spiritually imprisoned by revolutionary maximalism, their own experience was very much related to Judaic apocalypics, that apocalypics which was surmounted and conquered by the Apostle Paul and the Christian Church. It was the victory over this Judaic apocalypics that made Christianity a universal historical force. The Russian apocalypse contains within itself the greatest dangers and temptations. It is able to direct all the energy of the Russian people along a false path; it is able to prevent the Russian people from fulfilling its calling in the world; it is able to make the Russian people a non-historical people. Revolutionary apocalypics turn the Russian people from reality and plunge them into the kingdom of illusions. Liberation from this false and unhealthy apocalypse does not mean the destruction of any apocalyptic consciousness. Russian apocalypticism also conceals positive possibilities. In the Russian revolution, the Russian sins and temptations that were revealed to the great Russian writers are being eliminated. But great sins and great temptations can only exist in a people with great possibilities. The negative is a caricature of the positive. The Russian people fell low, but great possibilities are concealed in it, and great prospects may be revealed to it. The idea of a people, the divine concept of it, remains, even after a people has fallen, has betrayed its goals, and has subjected its national and state dignity to the greatest humiliation. A minority may remain true to the positive and creative idea of a people, and from that minority a regeneration may begin. But the path to regeneration proceeds from repentance, from consciousness of one's sins, from a cleansing of the national spirit from demonic specters. And, first of all, one must start distinguishing among specters. Old Russia, in which there was much evil and deformity, but also much good and beauty, is moribund. The new Russia which is being born in deathly torment is still a riddle. It will not be such as the activists and ideologists of the revolution anticipated. Its spiritual image will not be of one piece. In it, the Christian and antichristian principles will be more sharply separated and opposed. The antichristian specters of revolution give birth to their kingdom of darkness. But the Christian spirit of Russia must manifest its strength as well. The power of this spirit is able to work in the minority, even if the majority falls away from it.

SERGEI BULGAKOV

At the Feast of the Gods

Pro and Contra
Contemporary Dialogues

Fortunate is he, who visited the world
In its fatal moments—
The gracious gods invited him
To share their company at a feast;
He looked upon their highest spectacle,
He has been received in their council,
And while still alive, as a dweller of heaven,
Has drunk immortality from their cup.

—Tiutchev

Participants:

A PUBLIC FIGURE
A COMBAT GENERAL
A DIPLOMAT

A RENOWNED WRITER
A WORLDLY DIVINE
A REFUGEE

FIRST DIALOGUE

O, Rus! forget your former glory,
The two-headed eagle has been vanquished.

—Vl. Solov'ev

Disappear into space, disappear
Russia, Russia mine.

—Andrei Belyi

DIPLOMAT: I often recall our two meetings now. One in L'vov, at the height of our Galician offensive. Then you spoke warmly about the statue of Nike Samothrace, about the tempest of joy, about the storm of victory. . . .

PUBLIC FIGURE: I remember well, but now I wish I could burn that memory out of my brain.

DIPLOMAT: And the other meeting, at the very beginning of the revolution here in Moscow. Then you spoke of the merciful Dionysus who walks the Russian plain, about the new era, and about a Slavic renaissance.

PUBLIC FIGURE: Perished, everything has perished. Everything has died, and we have died, we wander like living corpses and dead souls. To this moment, I still do not understand; my mind refuses to absorb it. There was a great power, necessary to its friends and terrible to its enemies, but now it is putrid carrion, which falls off bit by bit to the joy of all the crows that swoop down. In place of one-sixth of the world, a stinking gaping hole has appeared. Where is that great-souled and luminous people which was so appealing in its childish faith, its purity and forgiveness, its giftedness and humility? Now it is a plundering horde of murderers, traitors, pillagers, bloody and filthy from head to foot, and into all kinds of vulgarity and beastliness. Some kind of black transformation occurred; the people of God became a herd of Gardarene swine.¹

DIPLOMAT: You spoke with the very same fire about Nike and about Dionysus. And now evidently Circe has also appeared, who turns Dionysianized citizens into swine.

PUBLIC FIGURE: I don't have the strength to cope with that. I fear I will lose my mind. But, on the other hand, I am already at the point of fearing nothing. . . .

DIPLOMAT: You don't say!

PUBLIC FIGURE: Life has lost its taste; the sun no longer shines, birds no longer sing. Everything is covered by a bloody and filthy haze from noxious fumes. At night, you doze off and forget everything. But then you wake up and remember, and such a dark anguish descends upon you that you wish for only one thing—to depart this best of all worlds for good, to see nothing, to know nothing, to feel nothing. . . . I remember after a severe loss, how difficult it was for me to wake up in the morning to live through my unrecoverable loss once again. Then I was illumined by a mysterious joy from another world, and my soul grew wings, but now there is nothing, nothing grows. The soul is dying. This is truly death without resurrection, a worm which never sleeps. How can one stand it? How can one comprehend? Why was I fated to outlive Russia? Why was it not granted to me to close my eyes while Russia still existed, like friends of mine who were called by God. Now only one melody sounds in my soul:

O, in this age, criminal and shameful
Not to live, not to feel—is an enviable lot
It is good to sleep, it is better to be a stone.

1. The reference is to the healing by Jesus of two men possessed by devils, who were driven from them into a herd of swine. Thus possessed, the herd perished. (Matthew 8, 28-32). The Diplomat, with his reference to Circe, seems to be unaware of this. *Ed.*

DIPLOMAT: Russian hysterics! Is it really impossible to suffer, having clenched one's teeth, without moans and sobs, and without wailing in one's vest? And, if it really is intolerable, is it not possible to spit in the face of this world, proudly and calmly, like the last Roman who fell on his sword? But I have little faith in this ecstasy of grief, and still less in these declarations about a lost taste for life. From all these, a "most indecent craving for life" shows through, "the force of Karamazovian baseness." But one can't love life any other way—only blindly, thoughtlessly, and without any kind of justifications. And now, under the Bolsheviks, and already without Russia, life remains precious for us as before, and we try to save it with quarter-loaves of chafflike bread. We can manage all right without Russia, but, you know, without bread and sugar it really is a bit difficult. Those Marxists are right—they are not afraid to look truth in the face. Meanwhile, we are overpowered by the phrase, and apparently on our deathbed we do not know how to manage without it.

WRITER: I am sorry, but I am totally unable to accept your idea of Bolshevism; it is not generous, and it is even uncultured. True, everyone has the same sorrow. We have all been stunned by the new sinking of Atlantis into chaos, by the catastrophic ruin of our continent which suddenly disappeared from the historical map. How recently this poetic cry sounded savage to us:

Disappear into space, disappear,
Russia, Russia mine.

But, in fact, it did up and disappear, and in its place traitorous "separatists" began to swarm—all sorts of nocturnal monsters. After all, we are witnessing Russia's funeral.

DIPLOMAT: I don't like, and don't know how to speak pitiful words. If you want to know, it is too painful for me. But if only I could cry, then I would have cried all my tears long since, four years ago, when the world conflagration first ignited. Even then, it was clear to me what this war would cost Russia, and that which is dearer to me than Russia—I do not conceal, but am proud to admit it—the European world. As for Russia, I had no doubt that she would fail militarily. In fact, I could not see how a half-barbarous, badly ruled, and economically backward nation could sustain with honor a trial of conflict with the most powerful of the culturally advanced nations. If I could hope for anything, then it was only for aid from the more advanced allies, but I ceased counting on that beginning in 1915, when it became clear that they were destined always and everywhere to be late, being themselves defeated by some kind of democratic Hamletism. But here is something I have always wanted to ask you: what became of the conscience and reason of those who, forgetting our reality, suddenly literally went crazy, and began a spate of words about the liberating mission of Russia, about Constantinople, and about the cross on Hagia Sophia—in a word, they pulled all those Slavophile

ragged out of mothballs. Where were your eyes? Now everyone swears and groans that these childish daydreams did not come true, but, after all, the judgment of history is dispassionate, you must admit that. And history would sooner justify Germanism, even Bolshevism, rather than this Manilovism or Tentetnikovism.² Pardon my brusqueness, but, after all, none of us are now quite up to politeness.

PUBLIC FIGURE: I admit that now even I am surprised at the frame of mind of 1914, it seems as if some kind of psychosis prevailed, and people could not hold up under changes in the political climate. I remember this now, seeing how some artists and poets cannot hold up under the pressure of Bolshevism and act as if they are its prisoners, not realizing the ambiguity of their position. Besides, at that time, the whole world was seized by this messianism—how could our “femininity” have held ground against it?

WRITER: I fully disagree with this self-defamation. I render full account now for everything I thought, wrote, and said then. And just imagine, I completely subscribe to all this even now. And in this I hope that I do not stand alone, but have with me a “cloud of witnessess”—from Pushkin and Tiutchev to Dostoevskii and Vladimir Solov’ev. In the circle of these men, wise in God, I will not fear the scorpions of your irony. Indeed, this may be a good time for irony and gloating, but you certainly rushed the final judgment of history. Thus I believe, as before, that Russia truly is called to show to the world a new, religiously united community, and the hour of its birth *may* have been anno 1914. Furthermore, participation in the World War *may* prove to be the great service to humanity which opened a new period in Russian and universal history—namely the Byzantine period. But, of course, this presupposes that the Turks be chased out of Europe, and that the Russians have Constantinople, just as it was predicted by Tiutchev and Dostoevskii. . . .

PUBLIC FIGURE: But what happened?

WRITER: What happened was that Russia betrayed its calling, proved unworthy of it, and therefore fell, and its fall was great because its calling was also great. What is happening now is like the negative of a Russian positive: in place of an ecumenical, religiously united humanity, there is the proletarian international and the “federated” republic. Russia betrayed itself, but it could not help but betray itself. Great tasks in the lives of separate persons, as well as whole nations, are entrusted to their free choice. Grace does not impose itself, nor can God be profaned. Therefore, it follows to allow beforehand different possibilities and deviations from the path. You know, this question always interested S. V. Kovalevskaia, both from the perspective of mathematics and general humanity, and she poured out her soul in a twofold drama: *how*

2. Manilovism—see Berdiaev, note 6 above. Tentetnikov is a character personifying indolence in the uncompleted second part of *Dead Souls*. *Ed.*

it might have been and *how it was*, with one and the same actors, but with a different destiny. Such a twofold drama about Russia now is being traced by the finger of history: now we live through the sad "how it was," but then, we could and should have thought about "how it might be."

DIPLOMAT: That's our problem. At first, we always contrive a fantastic orbit, and then calculate imaginary deviations from it. We invent for ourselves the chimera of a non-existent people, and then we are obsessed with it. And this was done, after all, in the course of an entire century, moreover it was done by the best minds of the nation, its brain. But don't you understand, gentlemen, that your scribbling brings slander and abuse on your very own people; after all, the people will inevitably turn out to be guilty if it does not justify the calling ascribed to it. The people wants little plots of land, but you promise it Byzantium and the Cross on Sophia. It wants the comforts of home,³ but you urge it on to war to the victorious end. You know, gentlemen, what is written on this subject in the Book to which you at times so like to refer: "You tie up bundles which are too heavy to bear and then don't want to lift a finger to move them." No, the Bolsheviks are more honorable; they don't compose fairy tales about the people. They approach it directly, with the program of Leskov's *Sheramur: chow*.⁴ And the people follow them, because they promised it "chow," and not a Cross on Hagia Sophia.

WRITER: Nowadays, it is your turn to celebrate; and it is easy to be a *Sheramur* when *Sheramurism* reigns all around. But where was your skepticism, when it appeared that all Russia was overcome with enthusiasm in those unforgettable days in Moscow and Petrograd? . . .

DIPLOMAT: Granted, now we really know the entire hidden side of those parades, yes and much more from the early history of the war.

WRITER: Remember the beginning of the war?—our Galician victories, the spirit of the troops, which we even recognized here, by the mood of the wounded and the general enthusiasm. Try to put aside the base *Sheramurism* of the historical moment and, in your mind, extend the main line of history which *then* took shape. Where does it lead? We were already on the eve of the march to Constantinople, and, after all, this is an entire historical program, a cultural symbol. But there is no greater sadness, than to recall past happiness in days of misfortune. . . . Would you deny that the people has different possible paths, just as the soul of the people has two extremes: a higher and a lower? The people, in its higher self-consciousness, is the body of the Church,

3. Literally (and more colorfully), "he wants to lie on the stove with his wife." *Ed.*

4. The main character of N. S. Leskov's short story "*Sheramur*" (originally entitled "*Children of Cain*") is inordinately fond of eating. Leskov described him as a "hero of the belly, his motto is *zhrat* (to eat like an animal); and his ideal is to feed others." Quoted by Hugh McLean, *Nikolai Leskov: The Man and His Art* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Univ. Press, 1977), p. 360. *Ed.*

the clan of the holy, the kingdom of holiness; but, in its fall, it is the revolutionary mob which, drunk on some democratic moonshine labeled J. J. Rousseau or K. Marx, follows after a red flag and bawls "forward." And can it be that, up to the time of this revolutionary binge, our people were not Christ-loving and radiant, sacrificial and beautiful? Would you deny this? No, you would not.

DIPLOMAT: That's right. In a certain sense I won't deny it.

WRITER: But if you won't deny it, then you also cannot deny that such a people is worthy of the calling indicated by its prophets, not as a privilege, but as a weighty responsibility. . . . Therefore, no matter what, in this terrible time, we must now preserve knightly faithfulness to the people's, as well as our own, holy relic. Forgotten will by my right hand, if I forget you, O Jerusalem; let my tongue stick in my throat, if I begin to abuse and be a Sheramur in the footsteps of the Bolsheviks.

DIPLOMAT: Just a moment, that which you now call Sheramurism with such lethal irony, is nothing more than a direct continuation of that universal slaughter in which you manage to distinguish high and low, the left hand and the right hand. For me, no such considerations justify this nightmarish calamity. Admitting its unavoidability, the very most I am able to do is to bow before it, but only in the way I must bow before the force of illness and death. Therefore, I have been in mourning in my heart ever since 1914—it is shameful to admit sentimentality, but after all, even the soberest people are sometimes sentimental and even superstitious. Precisely at that time, my home, my sanctuary, European civilization, caught fire, and from that fire our thatched Russia was devoured in flames. In earlier times it was still possible to wage a war, almost as a daily routine; at that time there were other nerves and other morals. People slaughtered each other for the glory of God. But for contemporary Europe, war is unbearable and criminal, it is an abomination before the Lord, and in this total insanity and fall I don't see any ray of hope.

WRITER: So, obviously, you assume that Europe, suffocating in capitalistic barbarism and in the tensions of militarism on the eve of the war, had more spiritual health than now, when the purifying storm has already broken? Actually, at that time, your Europe was a miserly *bourgeoise*, who had enriched herself so much that she allowed herself to live in her pleasure. Just remember those European health spas, and all that mercantile mindedness, those petty attainments of petty people on which Europe wasted herself. I will make a personal admission to you: in the last fifteen years I completely stopped traveling abroad, and precisely because one lived so well there. I feared to poison myself with that comfort, one can lose faith because of it. . . .

DIPLOMAT: A valuable admission, although I don't know whom it characterizes more. But do you know the saying of the son of Sirach "the dishon-

orable one runs, not only when he is chased?"⁵ Perhaps out of fear you overlooked something there besides philistinism, which in any case we don't have to borrow from the West. Others who think as you do even preferred living in the West, in order to kindle the national spirit and to stock up there on all kinds of negative evidence, so that they might paint facts and fairy tales about the Russian people, about Russian socialism, or about the Russian Christ, according to their points of view. But why try to hide it? Even Tiutchev felt more comfortable in the Munich embassy than in his "long-suffering native land," "in places unloved, though native." In general, I do not know what would have come of our Slavophilism of all kinds if it had not been for that "marvelous distant place" of Europe, and it sometimes even seems to me that Slavophilism was partly an outcome of the emigration.

WRITER: And nevertheless, on the eve of the war, Europe was a spiritually moribund land, and anything would have been better than a return to *status quo ante*.⁶ In general, I have no taste for any kind of restoration, and least of all for a spiritual one.

DIPLOMAT: However, even a bad peace remains better than a good war; this will be confirmed by all those who really were forced to bear the burdens of war, all the maimed, the widows, and the orphans. But, all the same, I have to pose my question to you again: how could you and the likes of you reach such a frenzied rattling of, alas only verbal, arms—reach such an apotheosis of universal slaughter? Speaking, as is your habit, in the name of the people (who does not do that?) you claimed, thanks to the fact that the people was silent, that all it wanted to do was to smash the godmanhood of the German vampire and to erect a Cross on St. Sophia. But when the people got its voice, it showed in fact what it really thought about vampires, and about Sophia.

WRITER: Is it really necessary once again to rehash all this tiresome pacifist rubbish, to repeat the arguments of Dostoevskii, Solov'ev, Tolstoi and others, as if through unctious reasoning one could conquer war? Leave this vegetarian sanctimoniousness to those dimwitted Tolstoians, who do not want to see further than the end of their noses. Moreover, this chorus has also been joined by the revolutionary pacifists, who are themselves covered from head to foot in blood and filth. I really am prepared to kiss the hands of a combat officer, but I can't see these socialist janissaries, these various dry land sailors, and this entire red legion. I avoid them on the street like offspring of the devil.

DIPLOMAT: However, you cannot deny national spirit of this type, which you call legion. The misfortune is that with your chauvinism, which also possessed European public opinion in the same way, you sustained an atmosphere

5. The reference is to the Biblical *Ecclesiasticus* or *The Wisdom of Jesus the Son of Sirach*, a book of the Orthodox Old Testament considered apocryphal in the western Church. I have not been able to find the passage. *Ed.*

6. "The state in which matters were before." *Ed.*

in which it was impossible even to think about a quick termination of the war. Thanks to that, the first moment of the revolution, when such an attempt at liquidation would have been natural, was lost. But our public opinion lacked sufficient independence for this, and how much would then have been avoided, if the question of peace had been raised at the outset.

WRITER: Now, when the war has failed, it is easy to assign blame.

DIPLOMAT: Nevertheless, let me pursue my question to the end. In no way do I propose to waste my powder in a defense of pacifism; clearly it is necessary to defend oneself if someone attacks, I have no desire to play Ivan-the-fool. I will go even further. If reasons of state and national interest ordain something to be gained from this war, then it is necessary to seize whatever can be had without any kind of pretense of "historical tasks." In war, all are wolves and there is no pretending to be a sheep. For us, such a tasty morsel was always the Bosphorus, and it seemed at one time even Galicia. Others—even from your camp—dreamt of more, namely, of concluding peace right in Berlin and Vienna, having passed through the enemy's entire country with valiant cossacks. It is shameful and bitter even to recall this now, nevertheless we learned something and matured during this ordeal. So these are all wolfish feelings. Leviathan is Leviathan. That's how the Germans are now swallowing piece after piece of Russian territory, and still can't stop. But you entwined this iron chain with roses, you even blasphemously and hypocritically erected a cross above it. You know, this reminds one of how, nowadays, they don't simply take away property, but requisition it to the glory of the socialist faith, which, after all, some profess out of conscience and not only from cupidity and rapaciousness.

WRITER: I in no way fear either your sentimentalism or your comparisons; superficially one may juxtapose a great historical task and a pitiful, fanatical idea. All Russian history tells us that "Constantinople must be ours." But history is not made with white gloves, and its hero is not a school teacher. Kingdoms are created and destroyed in the thunder of battles, in earthquakes. And when the earthquake *began*, when we found ourselves drawn into war with Turkey, it became clear to anyone who did not close his eyes, that history had posed the question of Constantinople. Even earlier we knew for sure that it is a holy symbol of a new historical period for Russia. It was not for us to set the time and terms, nor could we resist them. Therefore, I sensed as misplaced Hamletism and historical faintheartedness, that resignation on the theme as to whether we, the unclean ones, are worthy of raising the cross on Sophia, or whether we should first close all the taverns, or at least abolish the Pale. . . .⁷

7. That is, the Pale of Settlement for Jews in western Russia which was the main component of the oppressive policy toward the Jews in Imperial Russia. *Ed.*

DIPLOMAT: I hope that now resignation finds greater access to your heart.

WRITER: Not at all. I do not suffer from hysterical timidity, which always yields to force. On the contrary, I am inclined to think that Russia was spiritually poisoned precisely because of deviation from its historic duty. Just consider how even the external appearance of the soldier has changed—he became something beastlike, terrible, especially the sailor. I will admit to you, that “the comrades” sometimes appear to me as beings completely devoid of spirit, who possess only the lower sort of mental capacities, especially that variation of a Darwinian monkey—*homo socialisticus*.⁸

REFUGEE: The writings of A. N. Shmidt indicated the appearance of such beings without spirit, but with a soul, beginning even in 1848. She relates this to the preparation for the kingdom of Antichrist. The likeness to humanity before the flood also occurred to me.

DIPLOMAT: Well, so what? Was it not very recently that you were almost willing to pray before the grey military coat? Can't you see what a lordly, unworthy attitude toward the people this is? One moment they are crusaders, and the next, beasts! Neither one, nor the other; rather they are dark uncultured people who were forcefully led to slaughter. At first they endured, and then they received a grade of 5 for conduct; later they lost their endurance, they grew angry and, well, even became “self-determined.” Then, of course, the lout broke all restraint. Crusaders! To this day you cannot forget that official lie, which was just as loathesome as the flattery which nowadays is lavished on various proletarian potentates by official pens. One deserves the other. In general, is it really possible in our time to speak of crusades?

WRITER: Now, unfortunately, it is not possible, ever since our people bowed down before the red rag and the golden calf, or more precisely—before its paper surrogate. But as long as our people still considered itself Orthodox, it was both possible and necessary to speak of it.

DIPLOMAT: Even then this was particularly sacrilegious. After all, even revolutionary consciousness has its stages: that which once was a crusade is now “imperialism,” or even “vampirism,” lofty motives masking base greed. And I never expected from our Slavophilism such a free translation of their romantic dreams into the language of imperialism. It had seemed to me that they thought of the possession of Constantinople, in general, not as the result of force and conquest, but as the consequence of the cultural unity of the Slavic peoples—in a word, as the gradually ripening fruit of history. I assume that even now such a perspective has not been completely lost from historical view, although has been immeasurably distanced. To enter into a captive Constantinople in the throng of the glorious Russians who surrounded the throne before the revolution, in order to commit all kinds of outrages there, and to

8. “Socialist man.” *Ed.*

arouse hatred in everyone—from that sad fate the gods spared us. By the way, don't you find a similar leap in thinking repeated by the Bolsheviks, while they are capturing some Russian city with fire and sword, and with that declaring its inclusion in the realm of socialist paradise—until they are driven back?

WRITER: I repeat that your irony turns back on yourself, like a sin against good taste. But as before, I do not consider wrong the thought that we must win over Constantinople so that a new Constantinople period of our history can begin, just as its Petersburg period began with the founding of Petersburg. History moves by fits and starts, with shocks, in that it is in no way sentimental, but rather more abrupt.

DIPLOMAT: But nature is evolutionary: *natura non facit saltus*,⁹ or in Russian translation: every vegetable has its season. And nevertheless—if you will—in this neo-Byzantinism I can see only passions and self-deceit masking “annexations and indemnities.” And weren't those politicians who found that Russia simply needed the Straits more honest and more frank? In your place, I would be more careful with holy symbols and would not allow them to be dragged so into the mud. Is it possible that you can recall your dreams of Constantinople without a tinge of shame?

WRITER: I am true to them, as before, and will be true to them till death. Up to death itself I will continue to think that Russia betrayed its calling and sold its birthright for a mess of pottage—which it did not even receive—thank God! . . . However, the ways of history are inscrutable, and it is not easy to guess the cunning of reason which directs it. Perhaps that task assigned to Russian arms, was taken up by German arms?

PUBLIC FIGURE: How's that? What do you mean?

WRITER: Well, the fact is that, in breaking off southern Russia, the Germans more firmly weld it to all southern, western, Austrian, and Balkan Slavdom, and combine Slavic streams into a Russian sea, perhaps more truly than we were able to do. The rest will be accomplished by the logic of things; having thrown off the yoke of Germanism, a unified Slavdom will run its natural course to Constantinople. And the presentiment of Tiutchev, which it is still too early to dismiss with irony, will be fulfilled.

DIPLOMAT: Again, Russian daydreaming that wants to escape from bitter reality. What a misfortune ideology is for man! And, in general, what kind of ideology could this war have? In the beginning it still seemed to have some kind of justification: self-defense, the protection of Slavdom (the Devil take it!), and the struggle for freedom. But, after all, by the laws of nature such enthusiasm could continue only two or three months. When the war went beyond that single permissible limit—note that in the beginning the not yet

9. “Nature does not make leaps.” *Ed.*

blinded consciousness of Europe understood it that way—the war necessarily began to rot and became a horrifying source of demoralization and brutalization. The desire to make a profit or destroy each other took on decisive significance, and then everyone lost his head. In this predatory slaughter, even the Russian revolution at first couldn't change anything. It only tried with all its strength to be a good child before its allies and to jabber weakly, "war to the victorious end"; adding in the same breath, "without annexations and indemnities," but with secret hopes on Constantinople all the same. And all of this nonsense dragged on until the Bolsheviks cut the Gordian knot. This single-mindedness of theirs, in which you see only scandal and betrayal, reflected the true movement of the righteous Russian soul, which did not allow itself to be clouded by the international Areopagus.

WRITER: Now again you seem to be in agreement with the Bolsheviks, who, having proclaimed themselves peace-loving before a terrible enemy, undertook the destruction of an unarmed population. What righteous movement of the soul, what hopeless cynicism!

DIPLOMAT: But, how can you fail to see that Bolshevism is a direct legacy and continuation of the war, its decay turned inward. This is the best denunciation of war, of all its criminality. We dreamed of a Constantinople period, and received civil war and social tyranny; from external robbery we went to internal robbery. There is a cruel law of life which says that all of us, who were heroes of the rear, who applauded war from a comfortable distance, must experience it on our own hides and must pay cash down for our box seats at the theater of world history. Now, after we have lived through all the nightmares of Bolshevism, we begin to feel shame for our dreams of conquest, which came down to turning loose a wild soldiery, all sorts of Bolsheviks, on the unprotected population of the enemy country. Now, in our country, this soldiery and universal running wild have been proclaimed socialism and called the "dictatorship of the proletariat." However all of Europe is also guilty of letting this soldiery run wild, and it will not escape its punishment from European-wide Bolshevism. I think the Bolsheviks are right in this expectation, although they may be wrong about the date, which for them is the most important of all. It's no secret that even in the beastly form of the Bolshevik, man nevertheless raises a mutiny against the cult of universal soldiery.

REFUGEE: There is much truth in this statement. It is not by chance that Bolshevism appeared precisely in Russia earliest of all. Of course, as the weakest economically, our people is the least capable of bearing the continuous burden of war, but besides that, it is the least perverted, it still has innocent blood. Think of how many savages are mowed down by alcohol and syphilis, to which the Europeans in their own way have become accustomed. And this does not mean that the savages, in this case, are worse than the Europeans, but quite the contrary, it is a consequence of the purity and nobility of their blood. The Russian soul did not long bear the yoke of militarism, and thank God! In

fact, would you really want the Russian soldier to have become a military puppet, to be hurled from one front to the other in order to lay down his life to gain new markets for the *Vaterland*? Isn't this *deutsche Treue*¹⁰ rather a perversion of what is natural? Our people does not like war, that is a fact.

DIPLOMAT: In any case it prefers war with its officers and an unarmed population to war with an armed enemy. I do not find much taste for one or the other, neither the Huns nor the Polovtsy. It is characteristic, that the Bolshevik yoke transformed the philistine attitude toward the Germans; the same people who recently were burning with chauvinism, now sigh for them as deliverers. Have you noticed the success being achieved by the "German orientation?"

PUBLIC FIGURE: Yes, certainly this is an extremely sad fact. The instinct of self-preservation extinguishes all other feelings in us. Bolshevism forcibly drove us into "bourgeoisness," and awakened that same spirit which it was prepared to damn. Bolshevism itself is the bourgeoisness of the "proletarians," who fought their way to the feast of life and who stretched out their legs right on the table. All of those shocked with fright, and thirsting for quiet and the preservation of property—and indeed for whom is that not precious!—sigh for the Germans, who are becoming the guardian angels of the bourgeois order. Russia positively suffocates from bourgeoisness, under the paw of the beast. What vileness, what anguish!

DIPLOMAT: Somehow, I have little faith in the true loftiness of feelings among those who so easily give in to fright. And, to tell the truth, isn't there a profound truth in this movement of "popular wrath," as in the former *Pugachevism*?¹¹ Of course, I consider socialism to be an incompletely thought out and childish prejudice, but when I recall that orgy of profiteering, which our Minins and Pozharskiis¹² were caught up in before the revolution, sometimes I cannot refrain from gloating. It served them right! They had to take the rough with the smooth! Of course, any kind of awakening of the masses makes them uncomfortable. . . . Now, after all, the people receives justified gratification for the fact that it bore the burden of this war. But, for all that, here is your moral of the war: thanks to the war, not the Byzantine, but the Bolshevik period of Russian history began.

10. "German loyalty." *Ed.*

11. Reference here is to the violence and righteous anger manifested in the greatest of the Russian serf rebellions and abortive attempts at social revolution—that of Emelian Pugachev in 1773-74. *Ed.*

12. With this ironic reference to Kuzma Minin and Prince Dmitrii Pozharskii, the legendary heroes of Russia's revival at the end of the Time of Troubles (1598-1613), the Diplomat suggests criticism of both the middle class and the nobility during World War I. *Ed.*

SECOND DIALOGUE

Russian rebellion is mindless and merciless.

—Pushkin

Wake not sleeping storms
Under them chaos stirs.

—Tiutchev

GENERAL: I certainly cannot agree with all these connections. With this judgment you lose track of an event of primary and colossal importance—the revolution. It was precisely the revolution that ruined the war, and then also Russia. The army was deprived of its soul, and the war deprived of its meaning as a consequence of the revolution. I don't know what kind of plot there was—German or Masonic—to bring Russia down, but the revolution, especially during wartime, was truly suicidal for Russian statehood.

DIPLOMAT: Of course, I did not forget about the revolution for a minute, but I also consider it in the context of the war, as one of its episodes, for that matter quite an essential one. Moreover, I see the revolution as the necessary, completely unavoidable movement of the people toward liberation. The overthrow of the old order is the only attainment of the war which I will accept unconditionally and without any reservation. The dilapidated throne was smashed into a thousand pieces. And although I know that, out of these thousand, a thousand thousand lucrative curule chairs formed for various Pompadours of socialism, and land captains of revolution, I know that all this will pass and there will be no return to the past. And the day 2 March 1917 will always remain a joyous date for me.

GENERAL: But for me it was one of the most horrible and saddest days of my life, truly a day of death. I don't know how I lived through that terrible loss, at a time when all rejoiced and congratulated one another. Even the memory of that day, damned by God, seems a torment. And then it became clear to me at once that the war was over and irrevocably lost, that our Russia was ruined.

PUBLIC FIGURE: No, as for me, I must admit that at that time I came to believe in Russia's future. Just think of it: the snake pit of treachery was cleared out; faithful, experienced leaders came to the head of the government. I now think that if the revolution did not succeed, it was because of errors, weaknesses, and passions, but by itself it was necessary and beneficial in any case.

GENERAL: Earlier, such judgments were capable of driving me into fury and despair, until I became completely disillusioned with Russian educated society. . . . Individual errors. . . . But you know everything, everything, was

already predetermined in those days when the inner link of Russia, its historical tie, its determining form of life, was broken. Isn't that what philosophers call entelechy? Well, Russia lost its state entelechy. Russia is a tsardom, or in general it is nothing. *So sagten schon Sibyllen, so Propheten.*¹³ Surely the Time of Troubles taught us this. The only ones not to understand this were those dimwitted, self-satisfied "leaders," who self-confidently spread out in ministerial chairs, as if they were at home. But other people came, less clever, but on the other hand more decisive, and without ceremony said: "if you please, get out." True, they trampled on some while doing this—overturns can't avoid this. But I say to you that they did well. The very thought of a Kadet, "constitutional-democratic" Russia is repulsive. No, better the Bolsheviks: *style russe*, "Go get 'em, boys."¹⁴ Besides, some profit could still come from this; for their disbanding of that all-Russian banality, the Constituent Assembly, alone, one should raise a monument to them. You know, Russia would not have gotten out alive from the deathly clutches of the gentlemen Kadets!

DIPLOMAT: That's a fatal line of thought, which condemns Russian conservatism to sympathy with Bolshevism—naturally, in the hope of restoration. It is not by chance, as they say, that so many of the Black Hundreds hide in the ranks of the Bolsheviks. Moreover, I am convinced that some of them work, not out of fear, but also out of conscience, all for the sake of this phantom. There is something truly Asiatic in this hatred of European political forms, in general, this hatred of "legal government" and law, from which we have always suffered and which now has become only an object lesson of international law. As a politician, I do not close my eyes to the weaknesses and errors of the Kadets, to their lack of constancy and constant glancing to the left—after all they have to fight with those same deep-seated Russian prejudices in their own midst. All the same, however, it is the only party in Russia that has political sense.

GENERAL: But that is just what they do not have. They understand nothing about Russia, and they see no further than the ends of their noses. How could they have understood anything about the significance of the tsar's power for Russia, or in general, about power "by the grace of God?" This was not mentioned in their school cribs. . . . Look with what helplessness they drift from monarchy to republic, and from republic to monarchy, justifiably not finding confidence in either place. For them, if you please, the question of the head of state in Russia does not have principled significance, but only practical significance. This is how Russian political theorists with political sense judge it. . . . No! In the revolution, they are guilty all around.

13. "Thus the Sibyls and the Prophets have said." *Ed.*

14. "*Saryn na kichku*" a wild pirate battle cry, which is also used in the Ivanov essay below to stand for reckless and decisive action. *Ed.*

PUBLIC FIGURE: Now, see, the guilty one is found—go get him!

GENERAL: Yes, they are the ones! They prepared it, they wanted it, and now they are offended that it is not working out their way, that they themselves got it in the neck. After all, we are not children; we understood very well the meaning of that “progressive Duma bloc,” with its moderation of the Octobrists on orders from the Kadets, and all that mobilization of society with its unbearable commotion. But if they had understood anything about Russia, they would have known the stakes when they whispered about a “change of driver,” which was the vulgar expression of the day.

PUBLIC FIGURE: But even you don’t mince words.

GENERAL: I am an old soldier and don’t like to play the diplomat. I well remember all the conversations with them on the very eve of the revolution. They spoke of how a “change of driver” would be painless, for the army and the country. And I, an incorrigible romantic about autocracy, a utopian, felt myself to be the only sober one among madmen. They imagined that to change a ruler annointed by God is as easy as changing a coach driver, and that, having changed, they could also go wherever they wanted. And off they went! Wasn’t a miscalculation made? Is it unpleasant now? No, the Bolsheviks are fine fellows!

DIPLOMAT: It is the sad trait of Russians, indeed of Slavdom in general, to forget about Russia because of party feuds. If only we could study party self-control in the name of patriotism from the Germans! To praise the Bolsheviks in order to gloat! And yet one unshakable historical fact remains: that the revolution did not occur in our midst as the result of some kind of design or conspiracy. Here you ascribe too much to the Kadets and their allies, and you even underestimate the stability of the “holy theocratic power” you favor, if you allow that it might be overthrown by intrigues, or blocs of the Duma, or even, as some maintain, by troops bribed with someone’s gold. The fact is that no one made our revolution or actually expected it so soon. It *occurred* by itself, through a natural force. The already rotten throne had collapsed and fallen to pieces long before, and in its place *nothing*, absolutely nothing, remained. That, I believe, must have been the main tragedy for fanatics of the autocracy. The war made the revolution, but after that both worthy and unworthy powers used it, and events began to unfold with inexorable logic.

WRITER: Well, even I will admit that no matter how hard I tried to be true to the holy tradition, I buried autocracy in my heart before its fall. Really, weren’t all those final years and months of the old regime a sheer agony. It was like a hopelessly ill person who was mourned before his death! When this finally happened, then I even felt something in the nature of relief, I had run out of tears or regrets. At the very least, I was relieved of the burdensome necessity of having always to excuse and defend it before others, and even before myself, and moreover without any conviction. You won’t believe it, but I reached the point that in front of anyone who knew my way of thinking I

almost felt myself personally responsible for all those mindless acts, for that incompetent lack of taste, that scrofulous case of rickets. One must say: let the dead bury the dead.

PUBLIC FIGURE: There was not only incompetence and despotism, but also *Rasputinism*, that very same *style russe*. It is really nightmarish to recall this, even now. Rasputin—there is the real inspirer of the revolution, not the Kadets.

REFUGEE: You are right, perhaps much more than you realize, insofar as Rasputin was the point of application and the medium for the operation of some mystical forces. And nevertheless this fatal influence expressed most of all the historical character and even the significance of the last reign. The tsar called for a prophet of theocratic inspirations—after all, even according to Solov'ev's scheme, he was supposed to do this. Was it his fault alone that in answer to his call, which came from out of the depths, he received only a false prophet. And here, was not the whole people equally guilty, and the entire historical Church with the hierarchy at its head? Or perhaps no one is personally guilty here, and if one may even speak of guilt then it is only about tragic guilt, more accurately about fate, about a certain sacrificial doom which befell the most worthy, and hardly the incompetent.

PUBLIC FIGURE: I just cannot understand this idealization of Rasputinism and this kind of mystification of a filthy muzhik. The judgment of sexual psychopathology is appropriate here, and only that. But certainly no one can deny the political results of this "Khlystocratia," and at the height of a world war, one could not leave the country as a sacrifice to these Khlystian experiments. But what can one say? I know with certainty that when Rasputin was killed, even quite devout clergymen, of course, those who had not built their careers on him, sincerely crossed themselves.

GENERAL: But perhaps you think that it was easy for me to witness both Rasputinism and all that rickety authority? But it is an axiom for me, that a people gets the government it deserves, and as regards the Anointed of God, I still believe in the fact that the heart of the tsar is in the hands of God, and that it is not given to us to correct His ways. This is something that it is high time we all realize, just as it is high time we realize that the tsar, for all his weaknessess, was nevertheless above his people. You didn't want the tsarist autocracy, now you bear the yoke of internationalism.

PUBLIC FIGURE: In my mind, I don't see great differences here.

GENERAL: Yes, after all, no matter how we grumbled and grieved then, there was still the hope that tsarist authority, despite all the unproved fabrications about treachery, would nonetheless lead Russia to a victorious conclusion of the war, and to the gates of Constantinople. With the revolution, all my hopes collapsed at once. Really, what the devil would I do with Constantinople (Tsargrad) without a tsar. Am I supposed to go there with papa Miliukov and dear Kerenskii? Better let the Turkish sultan sit there with the surviving old

Turks, the protectors of the ancient Islamic piety. I still prefer them. But that the army would perish and the war end ingloriously, I had not the slightest doubt from the first moment of revolution, even before Guchkov and Polivanov began to demoralize it, and after that "senator" Sokolov joined them, and later on the Bolsheviks started working the army over.

DIPLOMAT: I cannot understand the exclusiveness of your judgments. Isn't it possible to have a republican army and republican valor? Look at France.

GENERAL: Well, I'm sorry, but that which is good for the French, is death for the Russians. The Russian army was sustained by two forces: an iron discipline, without which no army can exist, and faith. While legal, authoritative power existed, there was also the basis for discipline. The soldier knew that he was confronted with the inevitability of obedience, and with this inevitability he humbly, but wisely and gently, made his peace. This is why he was such first-class military material; for him nothing was impossible. But then he had faith which allowed him to fight, not out of fear, but out of conscience. The content of this soldier's creed is well known; it may be said in three words: for faith, tsar, and country. But these three ideas were indivisibly connected for him: the faith was Orthodox; the tsar was Orthodox; and the country was also Orthodox, and not some kind of *patrie* or *Vaterland*.

PUBLIC FIGURE: But how many in the army were neither Russian nor Orthodox?

GENERAL: Whatever the number, Russian Orthodox soldiers comprised its core. But the others also have their faith, and not in "land and liberty," but in God. That's all there is to it. They have never had a principle of individuality, or a conscious discipline, or a concept of state. That is why our marvelous young fellows, once their faith was undermined, so relentlessly became Bolsheviks and the army dissolved. It became clear to everyone that an army is also a spiritual organism, and that Russian military might, like the Russian state system, is linked with its entelechian form and founded on faith, not on popular will and various inventions like that. Apart from this form, Russia does not exist. It collapsed, and crumbled! But, all the same, I say it is better to let it fall temporarily under a foreign yoke, which will educate it, than to rot from well-being under Kadet authority, with European parliamentarianism.

PUBLIC FIGURE: It seems that for you Germans, Japanese, Bolsheviks, and even Turks, whomever you will, are still better than Kadets—a strange psychosis of Kadetophobia, at a time when Kadets are subject to all sorts of persecutions.

GENERAL: That's right, anything is better. The Kadets, with their European slickness, are the main corrupters of Russia. You know, our Bolshevism is so native that it wants no part in this atheistic "legal state." Bolshevism, after all desires an Orthodox kingdom, only one according to a socialist creed. For us there is Holy Russia and an Orthodox people, and for them a socialist home-

land and a socialist pseudo-theocracy. Yes, and all of their prattle about proletarian culture really reminds one of the medieval *ancilla theologiae*, complete with the live coals of the Holy Inquisition, to the glory of the *ecclesiae socialisticae*.¹⁵ Generally, on the crest of Bolshevism something vital can be seen. Even their persecution of the Church is also from socialistic piety and zeal in the faith, and, surely, it is better than atheistic "tolerance."

PUBLIC FIGURE: You have talked yourself into a position where you portray insolent coercion and unconcealed robbery as some kind of zealotism, simply in order to denigrate the Kadets you despise. By this obvious injustice you make the strongest criticism of yourself, exposing your own fanatic blindness.

GENERAL: But you can scarcely deny that the revolution has nothing with which to fill up the emptiness it has created, except all kinds of negative freedoms and different cultural values. But the people in no way likes either freedom or these values; it replies to this preaching with violence and pogroms, unconsciously taking revenge for the fact that its soul had been taken away and it had been deprived of its treasure. Your army disintegrated, and you won't reassemble it, no matter what pay you give or whatever socialistic oath of allegiance you think up.

PUBLIC FIGURE: The disintegration of our army was caused by a series of errors, the authorities' connivance, and unscrupulous demagoguery. They overlooked things, and they didn't watch closely, that's all!

GENERAL: But surely, there was little that they didn't watch closely! Only trifles! Here's what I say to you. When Kerenskii lavished his eloquence on the soldiers, and called them to fight for land and liberty under red flags, within me I *feared* for the soldiers. Is it possible that they would follow him, is it possible that they would betray the age-old popular consciousness? But the Russians held fast, they did not follow; they stayed back cracking sunflower seeds. And later, when the time came, then they ran away, meanly, dishonorably, and treacherously. They acted like Russians, not according to a French model. Although the scoundrels are decaying now, yet they were Russians all the same. And the army will not rise again, until the Russian state system is born again. Neither the Kadets, nor the Allied diplomats who constantly muttered their lessons about democracy, are capable of understanding this, any more than Kadetized Bolsheviks can understand it. It is not by accident that they have already placed all of Russia under suspicion. No, the Russian people is gray, but the Devil has not consumed its mind, even though it now acts foolishly and senselessly—in a word, like that mad Ajax the Sword-bearer slaughtering the herds.¹⁶

15. "The handmaiden of theology," "the socialist church." *Ed.*

16. In Sophocles' play *Ajax*, the hero, driven mad by being denied Achilles' armor, kills sheep thinking them the chiefs who have done him the injustice. *Ed.*

DIPLOMAT: In this maximalism of yours, I see nothing more than the hope of restoration; however, this now appears among many as a consequence of fright and fatigue. Some will even accept a German puppet, if only there would be order. But here is where I become a maximalist. The cause of monarchy has been hopelessly lost in history, and one must have the courage to admit this, and draw the appropriate conclusions from it. The Russian revolution clearly showed that there are no longer monarchical feelings in the Russian people. Monarchy in Russia can only be the fruit of foreign intervention, and at once it will lose its national character. You can hardly be dreaming of this. And from there it follows that one must seek some healthy forms of popular rule, like republican parliamentarianism, which would deliver us from the clutches of social tyranny and oligarchical dictatorship.

REFUGEE: Probably you are right in your diagnosis, at least in its negative part. But doesn't it seem to you that the former state system, as a system of world powers struggling to preserve a balance, is already becoming obsolete, and that the former borders of states soon will become legend.

GENERAL: Do you, perhaps, mean to say that these borders will be changed in favor of Germany, which truly no longer has boundaries in the East? Moreover, there still remain Japan and China. Their historical turn now approaches: Panmongolism!¹⁷ After all, didn't Vladimir Solov'ev think this way.

REFUGEE: No, I definitely mean to say that these old states that now carry on a bloody war belong to the past; they are no longer in the plan of history. But on their ruins or, if you wish, out of them, a single state is being created, whose extent will correspond to the entire cultured world. Moreover, from this perspective, space will also be found for Japan when it embarks on Panmongolism.

GENERAL: And Vas'ka the cat listens, but eats.¹⁸ Instead of this dubious consolation, it would be better to have a good army. Then we would carry out a different plan.

REFUGEE: I certainly don't look for consolation in this, but it is simply the way I see it. And this feeling appeared in me with absolute clarity at the same time as the Russian revolution. If the existence of an independent state system is still in any way justified in history, then it is precisely through the existence of the Orthodox tsardom, which not only preserves within itself all the tasks of the Holy Empire, but also has its own apocalypse. Moreover, the revelation of it still lies ahead, but on paths that are not imperialistic. And now, if the tsardom really is no more, to what purpose are these remaining

17. "Panmongolism" is the title of a poem by Vladimir Solov'ev, in which he gloomily predicts that his country will be destroyed by hordes from the East. When the Third Rome is destroyed, there will not be a fourth. *Ed.*

18. From the Krylov fable, "The Cat and the Cook." Receiving a scolding from the cook, the cat continues to eat, thus not really paying heed. *Ed.*

“powers”? Restrainer (*ho katechōn*)—heed now the words of the Apostle (2 Thes. 2, 7) about “disappearing from the scene” (*ek mesou genetai*). Now the world can strive unobstructedly towards the last, definitive consolidation in which even Panmongolism will play its role.

DIPLOMAT: I can judge here only in empirical terms, but I must admit that I find this thought rather plausible. The fact is that great modern states are linked in their origin to national capitalism, and have corresponded to its specific growth, which according to many indications has already passed. Capital long since became international, and capitalism is becoming the same way. For capitalism, the state system has already become too narrow, it also seeks unhindered “self-determination”; further militarization which would necessarily be linked to a system of political equilibrium, would not be feasible for anyone. This is the real meaning of the formula: war to a victorious, more accurately, a natural end, until all the fuel is expended. If Germany wins, it will rule the world together with Japan, and then instead of a half-dozen Leviathans of the second rank, there will be one two-headed German-Japanese beast. If the Entente wins, the system of the United States will be established everywhere. Therefore, one should regard even the present situation in Russia only as preliminary, as roughly defined. Finally, one cannot ignore the post-war prospect of universal Bolshevism which once more would mix up the cards. And only Japan, which is warlike by religion, by temperament, by interests, and by the exceptionally advantageous situation of the moment, remains unreachable by all these storms. In a word, I also recognize for Europe, and above all for Russia—the danger of a threat from the East. And as regards the Russian *ho katechōn*, it is not for me to judge. By the way, even Tiutchev anticipated something like that. We realistic politicians have long been used to translate *ho katechōn*—as worldwide gendarme, the role played by Nicholaian Russia.

REFUGEE: The wider the events of war spread out, the more clearly one sees their fatal character for the destiny of Russia. Everything we need and which might rescue us arrives too late, or not at all. On the other hand, everything harmful is successful. It is as if some kind of plan or plot, not yet revealed, is carried out. Just consider: at the height of the World War, Rasputin’s influence grows stronger, and this leads to revolution—on the eve of a crucial offensive. After that comes the experience of the June offensive, followed by the Tarnopol catastrophe,¹⁹ Kornilov’s attempt to save the army miscarries as a consequence of paltry pride and petty intrigues. The Bolshevik uprising occurs at a time when Russia has the opportunity honorably to leave the war, and, of course, this possibility is replaced by Brest-Litovsk, while Bolshevism

19. Tarnopol was the city at which the Germans broke the Russian line and smashed the June, 1917 offensive. It was the first step in the disintegration of the Russian army. *Ed.*

triumphs everywhere and delivers Russia over to the enemy. At the same time, the Bolsheviks are insanely lucky everywhere, and all attempts to oppose them seem doomed to failure from the start. Of course, in this entire fatal chain of circumstances one can see the sin of the authorities and the darkness of the people, and even the direct plan of the enemy. But I cannot escape the thought that what is at work here is an invisible hand which finds it necessary to bind Russia, that some sort of mystical plot is being realized, that a black Providence is at work. "Someone in Gray," who is more cunning than Wilhelm, now battles with Russia and seeks to bind and paralyze her. Somehow she hinders the one who strains for a greedy mastery over the world. And this is largely unheard of in history, although it is also a negative, black miracle: the fall of the world empire, essentially in several hours, or perhaps months? This feeling of mine is of long standing and irresistible. . . .

GENERAL: If you have been referring again to Solov'ev's Antichrist, then I fear that a proper Antichrist would have nothing to do with us, and would have no one to deal with, so low has Russia sunk. By the way, in certain Church circles and in some monasteries they talk about the approaching kingdom of Antichrist, read books about this and circulate various prophecies. But the psychological sources of these frames of mind are too obvious, and, how often has this been repeated? In any case, it is even possible to do battle with Antichrist, but for this you need a special kind of army. . . .

DIPLOMAT: Well, I understand little about mystical diplomacy, and like Newton, *hypotheses non fingo*.²⁰ I don't like to engage in fantasy. I know only one thing for sure: that no matter what happens, Russia must establish a legal order, shore up a healthy state system, and of course cope with chaotic atomization. It is necessary to channel life between granite banks. *Roman law* is something our history did not foster in us. But apart from a legal path, we can expect political and at the same time cultural death. This is as clear as $2 \times 2 = 4$, without any mystical fog.

GENERAL: But it is clear to me that precisely such judgments are woven from the fog of scholarly abstractions. "Legal system," and "legal state"—you won't catch our people with such bait. It needs a personal, concrete state structure, linked with its soul. Only when this soul liberates itself from revolutionary intoxication, then from within itself, in an act of creation by all the people, it will regenerate lost power. Then Russia will arise by itself. All other things are but palliatives, in order somehow to lengthen "the remaining time of life."

DIPLOMAT: I understand what you are hinting at. But this will not be; time, fortunately, cannot be reversed. Besides, for the lovers of the "monarchical state structure," one might suspect that something is being prepared in the wings, but only with a foreign trademark: made in Germany.²¹

20. "I do not construct hypotheses." *Ed.*

21. The "made in Germany" is in English in the original Russian text. *Ed.*

GENERAL: That I fear most of all—still another substitution in our century of all kinds of substitutions. What I want can only be accomplished through a resurrection of all the people, which now frankly would seem like a miracle. Yet only a miracle can save us.

THIRD DIALOGUE

PUBLIC FIGURE: But we've already undergone one miracle: the ruin of Russia. Doesn't this whole catastrophe seem mysterious? This national suicide? Where once a grandiose temple towered, suddenly there was only stinking, rotting filth. Perhaps, in the hands of our German master, it will turn to *Dünger* for the cultivation of different cereals, but what of us? Our faith has died and has been desecrated; there is no longer a Russian people. Has history ever seen such a debasement of an entire people? I cannot wish it either happiness, or success, or even simple good fortune. No, just fate will send us "earthquake, famine, flood, abuse among ourselves, and invasion by foreigners"; indeed, all this has already been sent. Let the villains and murderers receive the fitting retribution. I hate them with all the powers of my soul, and spit in their impudent, loathesome, socialist mugs. . . . If I can scrape up the means, I dream of going to Canada. There, perhaps, a new Russia will begin, but here everything is ruined and defiled.

DIPLOMAT: I have already said that I consider this a profound and seditious untruth. First people stamp their feet, then like savages slash their idols to pieces, but all the same they cannot go without their playthings. Recently, they still fancifully bowed before the God-bearing people, the liberator. But when the people ceased to fear the Lord, went all out, and remembered its Pugachevian legends—after all, the people's memory is not as short as the lords'—then the disillusionment began. Of course, our people is dark and savage, everyone knows this. Take literacy and crime statistics—what do they indicate? The people was educated in "Witte's universities,"²² in those base pothouses, in chimneyless huts, or in factory flop houses. What do you expect? And in your historical account, I see unfairness more than anything else. That account ought to be directed at the cultured class, which has yet to fulfill its enlightening mission.

PUBLIC FIGURE: Oh, of course, for you, as for many, it's only a question of the number of schools and the annual consumption of soap. But, after all, the people's soul is tangibly perceptible in Russian history and in Russian

22. With this reference to "Witte's universities," Bulgakov criticizes the former finance minister's policy of rapid industrialization and his heavy reliance on the vodka monopoly as a major source of government revenue. *Ed.*

creativity. After all, we did not imagine this. Now ask yourself: is it possible that *this* same people gave birth to St. Serafim and Pushkin, Ushakov and A. Ivanov, Tiutchev and Dostoevskii, Bukharev and Vl. Solov'ev, Gogol' and Tolstoi?

GENERAL: You had better not bring up Tolstoi. If there was ever a man fatal for Russia, a man who devoted his great talent to the task of destroying Russia, then it was that old nihilist—the spiritual precursor of today's Bolsheviks. He's the one who imposed the International on us. I can't think about him without getting upset.

DIPLOMAT: You don't have to think about him, but neither should you pour abuse on the person in whom the Russian conscience lived. Wasn't it Tolstoi who always said about war that which is now becoming obvious to all of us, and who never entertained illusions on the sublimity of war? True, he bowed before the people's soul—after all, he was a lord—but he didn't compose messianic programs for it. Dostoevskii was the really fatal one for Russia. To this very day we have to work our way through the fog let in by Dostoevskii; he created the God-bearer. And now, suddenly, it seems that nothing is holy for this people, except its belly. And it is right in its own way, hunger is no joke. Even we become much less lofty when we are put on a quarter-loaf of bread.

PUBLIC FIGURE: I keep asking myself: if one allows that our people has now turned out to be a God-fighter and a rebel against the holy, that would be only negative self-testimony of its religious spirit. But, after all, most of the time it conducts itself simply as a lout and an animal, and it has nothing to do with faith. It is as though there are no demons whatsoever in it, demons have nothing to do with it. One can recover from possession, but not from bestiality. This is an obsession with me. Sometimes at night I wake up in a cold sweat, and I repeat in horror—not a God-fighter, but an animal, an animal. . . . Look at this chronicle of burglaries and defilements of churches and monasteries; after all, it's the masses doing this, not individuals. Look at the indifference to removal of the Law of God from the schools, the passivity to all this foreign domination. You know, it's all evidence of the same indifference.

GENERAL: There is much that one must ascribe to foreign poisoning in contemporary Russian life, which is now entirely dominated by false names. Not in vain do they hasten to decree it. Some people are trying to separate themselves from themselves, from any kind of organic link. They are transforming themselves from people into actors, who select their family names at will. Moreover, in our time, pseudonyms generally are related to *pudenda*, concern with which is forbidden.²³

23. "*Pudenda*" generally means that of which we are ashamed. Specifically it means both male and female sex organs. The meaning in this case does not seem clear. *Ed.*

DIPLOMAT: Well, we're agreed. Truthfully, it has always been that way: scratch a Russian conservative and you will find an anti-Semite. And Dostoevskii was not free of it, unlike Tolstoi. For my part, I propose that complaints about foreign domination are only a demonstration of our own weakness. And besides that, I ask you: how can one now distinguish the "God-bearing people," demoted in rank for bad conduct, from that ancient "stiff-necked people" which, after all, was not especially firm in its ways of "God-bearing" either?²⁴ Just read the prophets and you will see how even they repeat—but, of course, in a more ardent and inspired way—those same denunciations which now are pronounced over the Russian people.

REFUGEE: This similarity is in no way exhausted simply by reference to being "stiff-necked." In general, there is some puzzling and completely astonishing attraction of Judaism to the Russian soul. In his own way Vl. Solov'ev felt this, even Dostoevskii, and nowadays V. Rozanov. This *Wahlverwandschaft*²⁵ is very intimate, but also very significant and characteristic.

GENERAL: To put it simply, we become foreigners relative to ourselves, and we have lost our face, along with our feeling of worth.

PUBLIC FIGURE: That is what drives me to despair; after all, all other people have national self-consciousness. They determine themselves, gain their autonomy for themselves, and not infrequently imagine themselves in the name of independence, but they always stand firmly behind themselves. But, you know, we have nothing: no homeland, no patriotism, not even a sense of self-preservation. We live through memories of former greatness, when the great sovereignty of the Russian people was still protected by police, like that noblewoman who, even after the fall of serfdom, still continued to feel like a slaveowner. And it turns out that Russia has suddenly departed somewhere, has hidden itself in the fourth dimension, and only provincial nationalities remain, while the Russian nation represents only food for various parasites.

REFUGEE: I'm sorry, but in this very distaste for provincialism, in this inability and lack of desire to be content with one's own little world, whatever its independence, I still see the mark of our people's greatness and its spiritual excellence, at least in regard to its calling as the only people in the world of universal consciousness, free from nationalism. This even flickers through the deformities of present-day internationalism. And, in general, therein lies the guarantee of a great future, although everything great is also difficult and even dangerous. But a high price may have to be paid for this characteristic.

DIPLOMAT: All those same Slavophile illusions! Our people simply has not yet grown up to patriotism and nationalism, it knows only its hut and village. And these Slavophile-international fairy tales, which nowadays the Bol-

24. The reference is to an early Biblical epithet for the Jews. Exodus 32,9. *Ed.*

25. "Affinity by choice." *Ed.*

sheviks also have learned. bespeak only of our political and cultural backwardness. But, after all, these self-defining nationalities are, in fact, more cultured than we are. You probably know examples of how even the Tatars protected our churches from the Bolsheviks. And those atrocities with which the Bolsheviks stained themselves were not committed by a single nationality. No, we must resign ourselves and simply admit that, in the given situation, we turned out to be lower than all peoples of both the East and West. Similarly, we were conquered because our opponents are not only more enlightened and more cultured, but more honorable and more religious. It would be an incomprehensible flouting of the laws of God and man, if *deutsche Treue* were conquered by Russian infidelity. And if we are destined to drink the bitter cup of German occupation, then we must learn some sort of self-discipline from this school, especially in work. After all, to tell the truth, from top to bottom, we don't like to work and we don't know how. In general, the one who stood closest to the truth on the question of the Russian people was still Chaadaev, who had the boldness to admit all our poverty and destitution, in comparison with the peoples of the West. Moreover, even with him, one has to restrain oneself from reverse Slavophilism, which subsequently gives way to Slavophilism proper. But in his incorruptibly truthful national self-analysis he was truly great.

GENERAL: But here is the sad part. Together with the revolution, not only did our state disappear somewhere, but the Russian people also seems to have passed away and broken down into its elements. It represents an ethnographic alloy, and not of high quality elements at that. And each now speaks his own language!²⁶ We are not great aristocrats of blood, one need only to look at our noses or our profiles. So now this alloy has broken down, and the result is ethnographic pandemonium. It is as if Finnish and Mongol tribes wander on the Russian plain and carry out their bloody orgy, as in former times. It would be interesting to look at the successes of Bolshevism in the light of ethnography. . . .

WRITER: I keep listening to you, and I am speechless from indignation at all this self-deprecation. If ever it was necessary to declare war on faintheartedness, depression, and any kind of betrayal and infidelity, then it is surely now, when our people is untrue to itself and is undergoing a dangerous crisis. Only daring and trusting love can also be saving love, but I see none of that in your words. In fact, what have you learned about the Russian people which is new in principle, and which was not known, for example, by Dostoevskii, whom you allow yourself to judge so condescendingly? Didn't he know of the beast, the villain, and the blasphemer in the Russian people? He knew very well, but he didn't put faith in it, because he contemplated a different reality.

26. Literally, "*Gde Meria namerila, Chud' nachudila*" (Where the Meria says "meria," the Chud' says "chud." *Ed.*

PUBLIC FIGURE: Allow me to ask you directly, it is very important and agonizing to me. After everything experienced during the revolution, can you now bring yourself to repeat, and on oath affirm—well, even such words of Dostoevskii as: “granted there is bestiality and sin in our people, but in its entirety it never accepts, never will accept, and never will wish to accept its sin as truth,” because “the ideal of the people is Christ”?

WRITER: Of course, I won’t take an oath on it here, but I’ll answer you without any cunning or evasiveness. I believe and confess, as before, that the ideal of the people is Christ; it has no other. And when, through its sins and weakness, it forgets about this, then at once it proves to be a beast which sits in the darkness of the shroud of death. But even then, by its unquenchable melancholy, it gives witness to this very fact, and, all the same, it does not accept petty middle-class decency, moderation and tidiness. Our people has been completely blackened, thank you, although some poets have stood up for its soul, thanks here to Blok. . . . The struggle now going on in the people’s soul is both frightening and, of course, most dangerous for it. It may perish spiritually, but so long as this has not occurred—and it has not occurred yet!—I remain bound to it in loyalty, with a knightly oath. And, Lord, help my unbelief, for I am not some sort of blockhead, you know. I am experiencing what is going on, and it is sometimes difficult for me. But I believe, as before, that the salvation of the world will come through the Russian people, and that to it belongs not only a great future, but a decisive word in the fates of the world. And I still believe in the Holy God-bearing Russian land which, though profaned and defiled by fraternal blood, preserves Russia’s holy places. The Russian Empire is torn to pieces, but its seamless tunic is not torn.

PUBLIC FIGURE: It is easy to say that, but all reality cries out against it; all the gloom and horror in which we live testifies against it.

WRITER: I don’t agree with that either. The darker the night, the brighter the stars. After all, you do not dispute how much magnanimity, self-sacrifice, and valor Rus’ showed during the war; but she also displays these qualities now, in this kingdom of darkness, when life in general has become so excessively difficult. On the whole, all of today’s pessimism is the offspring of confusion and faintheartedness; it is treachery. When we betray the people, even if only in our hearts, we do it very real damage. After all, besides the external, there is the internal link of things, any mystic and occultist will affirm this. We must now sustain the struggle for the soul of the people, above all, in our own hearts, in the innermost places of our spirit, and not be tempted over it. If, during the era of Batu or the Time of Troubles, the Russian salt of the earth of that time would have been seized by fear, and if its spiritual leaders would have despaired—and, you know, at that time the grounds for this were no less—history would have branded them as fainthearted. Russia responded to the horrors of the Tatar yoke with the radiant appearance of Father Sergius and the entire Sergius epoch of Russian culture, while, in response to the Time of

Troubles, came Petrine Russia with our whole new culture. Nowadays, some do not see the link between Pushkin and some dirty Bolshevik, though our wise and merciful Pushkin was able to comprehend completely the nature of the Russian soul, and even that of Bolshevism. For him, there was nothing hidden in the Russian nature. Not without reason did he cast his eagle eye at the Pugachev movement, at "the Russian rebellion, senseless and merciless." And not only was he not enticed by this, but he became more national than he had been. Do you really want to tear the rose from the stem, the fruit from the tree? Don't you understand that between the Bolshevik and Pushkin there is a more secret, irrational, and organic link, then between him and either the person who out of confusion today carries on like Chaadaev, or the damned German who pillages according to all the rules of military science. One could make a Bolshevik even out of Dmitrii Karamazov, from whom, if he repents, subsequently would emerge Father Zosima. But what will come from a sausage maker?

DIPLOMAT: So, here again we've fallen on the same old topic: Russia cannot be understood by the mind and so on, the usual *asylum impotentiae*.²⁷ But there is one wise adage that says that the victors are not judged, while another adds—woe to the vanquished. And sad reality testifies that the people of Pushkin have always abounded in snares, and so it is now—some pretend to be socialists, from bourgeois fright of course, while others plunge all the more impetuously into the German orientation.²⁸

WORLDLY DIVINE: There is something else I wanted to point out about the Russian spirit. Have you never considered what frightful importance the habit of mother profanation has for it, that profanity with which the Russian land has reeked from time immemorial? And with what artistic refinement! Frankly, one could compile a whole collection of popular art on this. And both Church and school have proven powerless against it. In our provincial cities, it was difficult to walk down the street with children and women. It seems mother earth herself grows faint from this vile, ceaseless profanation. It often occurs to me now, that if one looks for the roots of revolution in the past, here they are right in front of us. Bolshevism grew out of mother profanation, and, in essence, it even is a profanation of all kinds of motherhood, both in respect to the Church and to history. One must take into consideration both the mystical and conjuring strength of the word. And it is horrifying to think what a dark cloud has come to hang over Russia—there's your popular *Smerdiakovism*.

27. "The refuge of the impotent." *Ed.*

28. "German orientation" here refers to the views of those Russians whose response to the collapse of their society was to hope for a German victory and thereby a restoration, if not of the monarchy, then at least of order, law, and property. *Ed.*

WRITER: Of course, you are absolutely right. Evidently, even Dostoevskii underestimated this phenomenon in all of its significance and horror. I grew up on the street, and I know what etiquette in this field ruled among street urchins, what virtuosity, what variety of profane combinations they achieved. They themselves did not understand what they said, but good form required each phrase be embellished. And now, in time of revolution, this pornographic "glory in names" has gone to the limit; it is outright blasphemous fury. . . . However, if we want to comprehend this profanation of motherhood, then we must see that the mystical negative, so to speak, has its corresponding positive: a special reverence of mother earth and of the Mother of God as well, characteristic of the Russian people and the Eleusinian initiation into the mystery of Demeter.²⁹ Wherever sin multiplies, grace abounds.

DIPLOMAT: So, even an inclination toward stinking profanity turns out to be a mark of higher mystical rank. . . . And I thought that, at least here, we would all have recognized pure vileness, without anything positive.

GENERAL: But then there is still the tsar's tavern, the damned pot-house. What an awful fellow that Witte was in our history! He was the one who saddled us with capitalism, who raised this proletariat to drink revolutionary moonshine, and who built taverns all over Russia. That was a real plot against the people's soul, which only now has been fully revealed.

DIPLOMAT: You all seek a scapegoat, rather than admit directly and honorably that the object of your worship now deserves nothing more than to be a German field-lackey. Perhaps, when it has gone through this severe school, it will learn worthwhile existence, if it is not dissolved and devoured in the process, however. Moreover, physical extinction is to be feared now, not from the Germans, but from fellow-citizens of the socialist society. In the Germans we are forced to see deliverers; indeed, it's a sin to deny that more than once they have appeared in that capacity, and that thanks to them the most hellish plans have remained unfulfilled. That's our tragedy: from a Russian danger, it is necessary to seek salvation in the enemy. Do you know of any comparable situations in the history of other peoples?

WRITER: It is just that salvation in mail gloves, of course, that I fear most of all from the German yoke. We are too much like jelly, to the point of spinelessness. Besides, we must not forget that the romance between the Russian soul and Germanism has been going on for a long time. Can it be that our present allies have ever meant for us even approximately what Germany did—and, moreover, not the old Germany which I always have loved and honored in my heart, but the new? Just remember what a cloud of Germanism descended upon us before the war: Kantianism of various sorts, and Steinerism, and finally

29. Mystery rites celebrated at Eleusis in ancient Greece were dedicated to Demeter, a nature goddess associated with grain and the earth's bounty. *Ed.*

that whole Social-Democratic Koran, and who knows what else. Even now, many pine for and dream of a German book or journal. Any rapprochement with Germany is dangerous for us, just because it has such broad access to the Russian soul.

DIPLOMAT: Your confession of faith ought not to leave room for that fear. Rather, this taste for Germanic culture does Russian society an honor, for, in fact, what other culture can now compete with it? One must be fair to the enemy, even if he is a conqueror. That is as far as my German orientation goes. And, on the whole, there is no more threatening enemy for us than our own inner socialist barbarism.

REFUGEE: Yes, everything that has been said about the sins of the people, and about its fall, is true. Only doesn't it still seem to you that all these explanations are inadequate, that this concentration of evil in Russia, this entire demonic orgy, has something supernatural about it? In a word, if I may say my piece, I merely want to add that some kind of mystical plot has long been in preparation and has now unfolded completely. It is as if spiritual hosts were struggling for the Russian soul, desiring to take away the gift entrusted to it.

DIPLOMAT: I can only repeat: *hypotheses non fingo*, especially those that explain nothing. And, in general, we have had enough of this mystical chatter.

REFUGEE: But what if I sense this just as clearly as you do the ways of your diplomacy? Just consider the agents that were let loose on Russia: Germanism with its poisonous gases, revolution with the spirit of Azev, Rasputin—all these forces, real in their own way. And they all attempt to cover over the sources of living water, to achieve a spiritual substitution. In general, an obvious spiritual provocation is going on. And it is clear, without saying *for whom* the path is now being paved in the world, why the restrainer in various forms is being eliminated. In regard to this provocation, I will give you one small but conclusive example. Perhaps you have read A. Blok's poem, "The Twelve,"—a penetrating piece. It seems to be the only significant poem of all those that appeared during the revolution. Well, if it is about Bolsheviks, then splendid; but if it is about Bolshevism, then it is terrifying in the highest degree. In the poem, those twelve Bolsheviks, spiritually tattered and naked, bloodied, "without a cross," are transformed into the other twelve. And do you know who leads them?

With gentle step, above the storm,
With a scattering of pearl-like snow,
In a white halo of roses
At their head—goes Jesus Christ.

GENERAL: He took it too far! On the whole, our poets and artists really stand out these days; they've turned into court poets who try their best to

please their new masters. I don't see this as a question of anything else; he simply embellished for the sake of effect. *Viel lügen die Dichter*,³⁰ Nietzsche said of them in the old words of Hesiod. A terrible blasphemy, a testament to spiritual vagabondage.

REFUGEE: It's not that simple. To a certain extent, the high artistry of the poem is responsible for its insight. Perhaps, Bolshevism really has such a depth and mystery, which we have not yet been able to understand. But I ask myself further: how far does the clairvoyance of the prophetic poet extend? Is he someone with a secret vision who is able to see the coming Lord through the power of poetic flight? I had only to pose this question for the scales to fall from my eyes, and at once I understood what so agitated and troubled me in the poem, as something authentic but terrible as well. The poet here did not lie, he *saw*, just as earlier he saw—at first the Beautiful Lady, who later turned out to be the Snow Mask, and the Stranger, in general a completely ambiguous and even dark being around whom burned "a subdued purple-grey circle."³¹ And now he saw someone, but not the One Whom he named, but rather a monkey, an impostor who in all things tries to be like the original and is differentiated by only one letter in the name, just as Gogol's little noblewoman has only one dark patch inside. And notice that this appearance of the "Snow Jesus" brings, not joy, but fright. On this account, Vl. Solov'ev earlier wrote to one of his mystical correspondents that if "a certain phenomenon does not immediately produce any movement of spiritual feelings" and "the impression remains, so to speak, one of the head and not of the heart," then "this is a very important sign, long ago recognized by Church specialists on this subject." In direct reference to this, the specialists say that one should relate to a certain phenomenon, so to speak, with methodological distrust, because not infrequently after the sign of the cross, or prayer, the cloven hoof is suddenly revealed in it. Poetic matter has done a disservice here, but this episode itself is highly indicative of that spiritual provocation by which we are surrounded.

WRITER: On the other hand, revolutionary Chichikovs bustle about in order to sell off dead souls, and in the confusion pass Elizabet Vorobei off as a man.³² I had occasion to read one of those discussions where twelve Bolsheviks turn straightaway into twelve apostles, and where they become the ones to show you real Christianity, but it wasn't successful. They'll show you all right, but only a snowy Christianity, with an icy heart and a cold soul. On the whole, I've long since lost any taste for the airing of this old theme of the connection between Christianity and socialism.

30. "Poets lie a great deal." *Ed.*

31. This reference is to a cycle of thirty poems written by Blok in January, 1907 entitled "The Snow Mask." *Ed.*

32. In *Dead Souls*, Sobakevich tricks Chichikov into accepting a woman for a man by changing her name ending. *Ed.*

FOURTH DIALOGUE

The intelligentsia will destroy Russia.

—from *Signposts*

GENERAL: To be frank, I can't bear to listen to all these discussions about the spiritual significance of socialism, because I don't admit that it has any spiritual content. In all bourgeois-capitalist civilization, the very height of bourgeoisness is the socialist creed of the Messrs. Social-Bourgeois, who openly proclaim the gut as the only principle of life. Socialism is the most profound spiritual fall and squalor, it is the poison of the bourgeois order, which, having entered within, has poisoned souls. "Class interest," greed and malice, as the single lever of human relations—yes, this is worse than cannibalism.

PUBLIC FIGURE: But can one deny in present-day European socialism a great search for truth, a presentiment of a new life, a holy wrath? It seems that all this is obvious enough to require no proof. After all, it is only with us that everything is so perverted and defiled.

GENERAL: Yes, the Messrs. Socialists now have shown themselves around the government pie, and we know well the meaning of "class morals." The only comfort in all this vileness is that the masks have been removed and the lie exposed. One would have to be an idiot, or a spiritual corpse, to reiterate like an Old Believer what's been known for a long time, or to be moved by the thought of how the good Russian people will enter the socialist paradise set out for it. It's a good thing that this people took the socialist cudgel into its hands and knocked our Manilovs³³ on their brainless heads.

WRITER: Yes, socialism is surely some kind of fantastic obsession among the Russian intelligentsia. And notice, even now, with all the confusion and the dizziness, all these factions nevertheless babble about socialism, conduct interfactional squabbles, and sincerely think that the only trouble lies in the fact that power fell, not to them, but to others. They think that they would have built according to the blueprint of their party, and that the socialist paradise would have come without delay. Their newspapers write, and their professors and writers lecture, on this. In truth, this entire talentless, inert mass reeks of such stupidity and self-satisfaction. They do not notice that, ideologically, socialism has been smashed to bits and has collapsed definitively, and that their arguments have become further removed from life than the controversy over whether to walk with or against the sun, or whether to give the alleluia two or three times.³⁴

33. See Berdiaev note 6 above. *Ed.*

34. Ritual concerns of importance to the Old Believers used here by the Writer to stand for those who refuse to change their ways even in the face of new revelations of truth. *Ed.*

WORLDLY DIVINE: I don't accept that comparison, because the questions of Old Belief, especially those you referred to are full of profound significance and meaning even now, while, at the present time, an ideological interest in socialism, in my view, can feed only on dimwittedness. I only wish to say two words to defend the Russian people against the accusations groundlessly made against it. In fact, the Russian people were burdened with the sad role of unmasking socialism, no matter how much all-Russian boorishness resembles socialism. But, after all, one should not forget that the people was subjected to acute poisoning by this European invention, by this most toxic of the German poisonous gases. A horse's dose of the poison of socialism was injected into the blood of our innocent people. It is not surprising that, as a result, it fell into such a rage that a straight-jacket is required. . . .

DIPLOMAT: Your explanation is favorable to the Russian people, but not completely fair. Why should cultured socialism, which to a certain extent necessarily incorporates a part of the capitalist economy, have to answer for our barbarism? After all, socialism, in our Russian Bolshevik version means "go ahead boys, thunder, plunder, and stab!" European socialism has absolutely nothing in common with this dilirium tremens.

WORLDLY DIVINE: And I say that our people is ill, and is in a condition of acute poisoning. Of course, it is not very civilized and even savage, but up to now age-old folk wisdom and the teaching of the Church inculcated in it the idea that savagery is a sin, and, when it rebelled in the manner of Pugachev, it knew that it was committing a black deed. But now, you know, the people has been told that it commits the most natural deed, that it is right in plundering and murdering. It is given a new commandment: be an animal, have neither conscience nor honor, only vote for such and such a "number."

GENERAL: Yes, they have intoxicated our people with moonshine: Witte with vodka, and the noble gentlemen with socialism. The damned Russian intelligentsia! First it muddled its own head, then it poisoned and corrupted the whole people. And just look at the self-satisfaction and self-infatuation, the pomposity—even now, when everything has fallen through with a crash. How can a state survive, if its whole nervous system is poisoned? Salt of the earth! The persecuted, ideological, martyred intelligentsia! It's a leprosy, a plague on the body of Russia!

DIPLOMAT: You speak strongly, but not fairly. After all, it is beyond doubt that in the intelligentsia you have the main and uncompromising enemy of your political utopias.

WORLDLY DIVINE: No, in fact this socialist delirium is something fatal for the Russian intelligentsia, perhaps to the same extent as messianism is for the Jews. They too had zealots, messianic social-revolutionaries who organized Bolshevik experiments in Jerusalem during the siege by the troops of Titus. And, one need only recall that this was our custom from the very beginning—from Belinskii, Herzen, and Chernyshevskii, right up to our own day! And

everything that did not fit into this socialist channel was excommunicated from the Church, was swept away; while at the same time those who were excommunicated included the bearers of the Russian genius and the creators of our culture. On the other hand, in the camp of intelligentsia there were few gifts or talents above the average, and in the main a gray mediocrity prevailed. What is this—an aristocratic reverie and sentimentalism? Yet the intelligentsia is overflowing with the *raznochintsy*, and that notorious third element, which constitutes its own sort of guard. No, the whole matter rests on the religious self-consciousness of the intelligentsia, in its godlessness and nihilism.

GENERAL: Yes, the damned intelligentsia has now poisoned the whole people with its nihilism, and it has ruined Russia. It was precisely the intelligentsia who ruined Russia. This must finally be said loud enough for all to hear. . . . Not since creation, has the world seen such a picture: a primitive people, savage and frightening in its rage, poisoned by the intelligentsia's nihilism: a combination of the darkest forces of barbarism and of civilization. Nihilistic savages! That's what the intelligentsia did to our people. It ravaged the people's soul, spat on its faith, and defiled the holy of holies.

DIPLOMAT: Listening to you, one might think we did not have our own native nihilism. But think of Dostoevskii himself. And isn't Gor'kii's spiritual vagabondage native?

GENERAL: Iakuts, Chukchis, Iroquois, Samoyeds, Tungus, whomever you like, all have their religion, their shrines, their cult and way of life, and therefore also their spiritual culture. While here, instead of God, they've set up the belly! Others may bow before a block of wood, but these bow to a feverish chimera. Even for savages, this comparison is insulting.

DIPLOMAT: A fine people that allows itself to be so corrupted. And what can be said for the thousand year-old Church culture, which is decaying from demagoguery without almost any resistance? What a terrible historical account is now being presented to those in charge of the Church's education of the Russian people! And if you seek the guilty ones, those you may call to account, it will be primarily the Russian Church, and not the intelligentsia.

WORLDLY DIVINE: But, if you will, what else could have happened when the educated class, that same intelligentsia, almost without exception, left the Church and made atheism the first member of its symbol of faith, revolution the second, and socialism the third? Of course, the Church is unshakable in everything that concerns God's grace, but, as a cultural-historical force, it needed and needs enlightened agents of whom there are so many in western Christianity. But where are ours? No, the godlessness of the Russian intelligentsia is not only a characteristic fatal for itself, but it is the curse of our entire life. This has long been said of us, but now it has been frighteningly revealed for all with eyes to see. And saddest of all, is that at the basis of this lies, not an honorably endured non-belief, but an incredible religious frivolity, a kind of superstition. Look especially at the provincial intelligentsia of the

so-called second and third rank: the country doctor, the medical assistant, the teacher, the midwife. If only once they had doubted their right haughtily to scorn the popular faith! Before their eyes, people are born, die, and suffer—the marvelous and majestic mystery of life takes place, every day the sun rises and sets—but nothing stirs in their souls. In them, Pisarevism reigns steadfast. And that's not all! On the Russian intelligentsia rests a terrible and indelible guilt, for persecution of the Church by silent scorn, passive boycott, and that whole atmosphere of arrogant indifference with which it surrounded the Church. You know what courage it took simply not to be an atheist in that environment, what mockeries and insults, more often than not even unpremeditated, one had to undergo. I know the Russian intelligentsia very well, and answer fully for what I say. Yes, the destructive, pernicious force of this persecution cannot even be compared to that undertaken by the Bolsheviks. The latter persecution gives strength, summons to martyrdom and confession. But to confess faith in an atmosphere of the intelligentsia's hissings, foolish gibes and condescending scorn—no, that is worse than Bolshevism, which in its nihilism, of course, is the most lawful offspring of the intelligentsia itself, no matter how much the intelligentsia might disavow this. And now, fate has led the Church and the intelligentsia into a state of common persecution by the Bolsheviks. God grant this meeting may also lead to an inner rapprochement.

WRITER: Yes, this godlessness of the intelligentsia makes it uncultured and even anticultured, predominantly iconoclastic. After all, communion with culture comes through cult; it is linked organically with the capacity for reverence which is absent in the psychology of nihilism. Thus the intelligentsia is left with only a spiritual idolatry, which is what any deification of the people, or *narodnichestvo*, is. For this reason, the intelligentsia simply has not yet taken notice of Orthodoxy as a cultural force and, in particular, as an aesthetic principle of life. Only very recently can a change be noticed; at last they have noticed icon painting, and Church architecture. At a time of destruction they have begun to value the significance of the Church, both as a principle of state structure and even as a "national shrine." Of course, here I exclude completely those who seek sanctuary from the political and social fright which has seized them. But, even all this is little for religion. No utilitarianism, even the most exalted, is appropriate here; no practical considerations are allowable. Each person, for himself and for his personal account, must *fall ill* with religion, must sense the crisis of his own spiritual being and be born again. Then everything will follow of its own accord. The spirit breathes where it will, and we cannot relinquish these hopes. But without this, nothing will come of religious opportunism, except the kind of official political hypocrisy we had enough of during the old regime. To guard religion for the people, not having it oneself—this is surely worse than the most hellish nihilistic effort.

GENERAL: Unfortunately, the name of this nihilistic intelligentsia is legion. For all of these people's houses, libraries, courses for workers, and "sensible

entertainments" that superficially seem most innocent—all of these are in fact means for religious corruption of the people. Even when they are not directly aimed against the Church, they nevertheless silently undermine it, through disregard of Church canons. To schedule some reading at the time of a Church service, to schedule a concert or an evening of some sort on the eve of a major holiday—all this is done without premeditation, without noticing. But try to arrange such a thing in England! After all, homeopathic dosages sometimes prove to be the most effective. Why has everyone suddenly bristled up now, when the Bolsheviks set the celebration of May 1st for Holy Wednesday, when in essence, they themselves systematically always did the very same thing.

WORLDLY DIVINE: Yes, now our intelligentsia is faced with a dilemma: either to revive itself spiritually, by undertaking a radical revision of the spiritual baggage of its *entire* humanistic world view; or simply to rot alive, to die historically. The ideals of the revolution have fallen through, the idols of humanism and socialism have been overthrown. There is nothing by which to live. But, you know, the intelligentsia has lived and lives by faith; it is impossible to deprive it of its particular religiosity. Now, that part of the intelligentsia which will prove itself capable of life is faced with creative repentance, the spiritual rejection of all of its past. The grain of wheat will not bear fruit if it does not die. In many respects, the future of Russia also depends on *how* the Russian intelligentsia survives its current crisis, on the outcome of the struggle now going on in its heart. And one involuntarily wants to pray for it on its difficult and trying path. Let its blinded eyes be opened! If only spiritual laziness and frivolity would not triumph here, as it did after the first revolution. Our intelligentsia learned absolutely nothing from that, thanks to which, during the second revolution, it repeated all its errors, but in frightening proportions.

GENERAL: I don't share your hopes for a rebirth of the intelligentsia. Mind you, they panicked, but to this day they have learned nothing; they repeat, like woodpeckers, their "democratic" and socialist pomposities. And, on the whole, this notorious intelligentsia is nothing but a totally unnecessary misfortune for Russia. We need experienced professionals, educated specialists, and not these self-appointed saviours of the world, who constantly kick up a storm, but often are good for nothing when it comes to work. For them, there is no more contemptuous name than "bureaucracy"; but do we have any more disciplined, responsible, and capable group of educated workers than that same bureaucracy? The intelligentsia itself, when in power, showed what little it was fit for besides chattering. You'll agree that there could be no greater failure of effort than that which occurred at the parade inspection of the revolution. No, the intelligentsia is Russia's illness, its misfortune. And you yourself say that they have no genuine respect for Russian and, consequently, for world culture. They infect everything with their spiritual leprosy; they should be isolated like those infected with the plague. These saviors of the world ruined the war, seduced the army with their defeatism and with their democratic

idiocy, brought Russia to betrayal and treason, and now have placed the whole world under the threat of German enslavement.

WRITER: I definitely object to this placement of entire blame on the intelligentsia alone. We are all guilty for what happened, and each must find and admit both his personal and social guilt. I, at least, firmly admit my own guilt, although perhaps I still don't understand it entirely. Besides, the whole matter is not so simple. Naturally, I do not dispute that in Bolshevism the intelligentsia to a significant degree reaps the fruit of its own actions. Of course, Bolshevism is the ultimate expression of nihilism and deification of the people. The intelligentsia no longer recognizes its own idol in the image of Kaliban, and already is beginning to fall into reverse *narodnichestvo*. It begins to think like Chaadaev. But what was, and is, wonderful about the Russian intelligentsia, for all its spiritual blindness, is its self-sacrifice. And this is the undying beauty of its spiritual image.

GENERAL: Indeed, we have seen enough of this self-sacrifice. Let the future historian calculate its exact balance. In general, if there is any indisputable achievement in the revolution, it is that this rotten intelligentsia has completely failed, along with its delirious ideas and its insufferable banality. Only they themselves, in their self-satisfaction, do not see that they are already people of the past, and that Russia will manage without them.

WRITER: You are profoundly mistaken. In fact, the question of the intelligentsia and its spiritual fates belongs to that number of "cursed" questions of Russian life. I'll go even further. One way or the other, its resolution is of *fatal* significance for the history of Russia. What Russia will become depends, in large part, on how the intelligentsia will define its position. But is it really possible now to separate it from the people, like an extraneous body? The intelligentsia is no longer a class, but a condition, a mode of popular existence, the spiritual adulthood of the people. And Russia has already entered irreversibly into the intelligentsia epoch of its history, as it happened with Greece in the age of Plato, with Rome in the age of Augustus, and in essence with the entire contemporary European world. The organic and impersonal way of life is irrepressibly disintegrating, the personal principle triumphs everywhere. A new birth of man has occurred, or if you wish a new fall into sin, from tasting the tree of knowledge of good and evil. This is irreversible, and no reaction or restoration will resurrect the old structure of life. There will be only stylization and imitation, however many efforts are expended on this stylization. Because the people proved to be so open to the influences of the intelligentsia, its life style lost its resilience and resistance. No, we have no escape from the intelligentsia.

WORLDLY DIVINE: But there can be different kinds of intelligence, that's the whole point. Both Michelangelo and Leonardo were also intellectuals. And our Dostoevskii, Vl. Solov'ev, and K. Leont'ev and the Slavophiles—weren't they intellectuals? A struggle is needed not with the intelligentsia, but

with *intelligenshchina*,³⁵ in the name of spiritual culture. And one must hope that the lessons of history, the trials that have been experienced, would teach the intelligentsia much, would deepen its spiritual consciousness, and, most important, would move it towards a return to the Church. For the present, the intelligentsia is really undergoing a most severe crisis, but this is also the crisis of Russia.

REFUGEE: In fact, this crisis goes much deeper. All European culture suffers from it, and here the Russian intelligentsia is only a most sensitive barometer. The crisis arises, not from the war, but from general spiritual causes. One may say that the war itself is rather a consequence and a symptom of this crisis. The most penetrating minds have long sensed this, and the insightful have seen it. It has been spoken of by art, which is always a universal seismograph. For a long time that seismograph has been indicating that an eruption is mounting in the depths of the volcano. Must one not shudder with horror for the decaying world that shone through cubism and futurism? The flesh of the world and its beauty rotted, giving way to nightmares and chimeras. The Russian intelligentsia, most of all the Bolsheviks, fell into the ranks of this universal cubism. And, truthfully, their cries of world revolution and of the beginning of the conflagration were not at all as foolish as they seemed to many. They, like the possessed, have proven to be prescient, and they prophesy like the ass of Balaam, shying before the sword of the Archangel.³⁶

DIPLOMAT: Such profundity is unattainable for our brother positivists, but the universal crisis of socialism is obvious even for me; to make it more profound, really, is the responsibility of those who apply all their energy to deepening the revolution. The first blow to international socialism was delivered by the war, and the second by the Russian Bolsheviks.

REFUGEE: And all the same, Europe also cannot escape from its own Bolshevism. It too will shudder in the convulsions of world revolution; and the red horse of social mutiny will gallop across it. And despite the fact that socialism is already dead, this principle which is becoming obsolete, nevertheless, must come to recognize its weakness through experience. And the Russian intelligentsia, as the spiritual initiator of Bolshevism, is really the avant garde of universal rebellion, just as revolutionary Slavophiles from Bakunin to Lenin dreamed it would be, in all their programs of internationalism.

WORLDLY DIVINE: I have such a low opinion of the spiritual essence of socialism, that I even deny it the capacity to undergo crises. Social revolutions are generally bourgeois by nature, so long as one does not include a small number of fanatics blinded by a fantastic idea. And since the petty bourgeoisie

35. *Intelligenshchina* here refers to the typical ideas, attitudes, and behavior of the mainstream intelligentsia: radical secularism, and irresponsible, intolerant close-mindedness, etc. *Ed.*

36. When Yahweh opposes Balaam's trip to Moab, he sends an angel to block his way. (Numbers 22, 22-35). *Ed.*

is generally talentless and unproductive, so also is the social revolution. Here the aesthetic sense offers the most impartial testimony. Try approaching *intelligenshchina*, democracy, and socialism with an aesthetic standard, as Leont'ev did, and see what you get. How talentless and deformed the Russian revolution is: not a song, not a hymn, not a memorial, not even a beautiful gesture. Everything is derivative, banal, and vulgar. A scrap of red calico and the Marseillaise, stolen at just the time when we basely betrayed the French. On one of the first days of the revolution, I happened to notice a procession on a Moscow street. I am a calm person and, on the whole, favorably inclined toward the people, but, at the time, contempt and disgust boiled within me. If only Leont'ev had seen that picture! For that matter, he had in essence already foreseen it. Anything that is so ugly, I would even say vile, cannot also be truthful.

WRITER: That aesthetic cloak of a superman does not become us, and I don't care for that dislike of Leont'ev's, which he only masked by aesthetics. Besides, in essence, any picture requires a particular perspective. A spring torrent is beautiful and powerful, but, observed close up, it consists of tree stumps and mud. One must have a wise and merciful heart to perceive the beauty of the true popular nature. Goethe knew this secret, or should even he be taught the aesthetic rule of life. Do you remember Faust among the people, on a walk with Wagner—that magnificent monologue "*Vom Eise befreit sind Strom und Bäche?*"³⁷

WORLDLY DIVINE: Yes, but that was a convivial Easter crowd, and not a mob poisoned by demagoguery. However, I'll concede you this: if this blatant deformity has its own particular rhythm, then it is the very thing the Futurists have been chasing after for so long. Futurism is actually an artistic prophecy about mob rule, and not by chance has it joined in natural union with Bolshevism. You remember its attempt to include as artistic materials—on a par with paint—coal, the wood chip, the colored rag, and the bottle label. And, finally, you remember all that passion for the awkward, the blatant, and the ugly, which, at the same time, was forced into some kind of onerous meaning. Well, at the sight of this workers' demonstration, I recalled those Futuristic labor pains. Before me, in actuality, a Futuristic painting unfolded. This, of course, finds full parallel in the Futurist's literary works as well, the introduction into verse of all kinds of inarticulations, shouts, bellowings. . . . But, if you please, I just don't know how to take delight in the smokestack and all its flora and fauna.

REFUGEE: With your own words, you testify against yourself. If socialism has a certain intimate, subterranean bond with Futurism, which I believe is

37. "The streams and brooks are free of ice" from Part One of *Faust*, the scene entitled "In Front of the Gate." *Ed.*

true, then it also has its own profundity. It is a symptom of universal disintegration and crisis. The old beauty in the world has already died. Futurism testifies to its decay, to its convulsions and wails, to the moans of all the distorted creatures. . . . The world is sick, and therefore art is also sick. And therefore the street is so ugly. . . . Life does not give birth to beauty. Leont'ev sensed this acutely, but all the same did not want to admit it in full seriousness. He always wanted somehow "to freeze," to return to the old. But nothing need be frozen, for the moaning creature strives towards the great Beauty, toward the light of the Transfiguration.

GENERAL: This is all self-deception and jabbering, a refusal to look unadorned reality in the face. Since the revolution began, we have been living in utter filth, in a pigsty. Gradually we are unlearning human speech. Just look at what our language is turning into, with that new loathesome orthography, the invention of nihilism—also a gift of the Kadets!—and with that jargon of the comrades and their various Futurist words. I feel that I myself am being infected with this jargon. Life is becoming simply repulsive, between the base mob and the talentless, philistine intelligentsia. *Odi profanum vulgus et arceo*³⁸—truly; it was just the same even then, in the age of Horace. And, for the present, I see nothing bright in Russian life.

FIFTH DIALOGUE

"Thé Russian Church in paralysis."

—Dostoevskii

"From the East the star rises."

—the same

WORLDLY DIVINE: You are forgetting the most important thing. You are leaving out the most valuable achievement of Russian life, which alone can compensate for, and in a certain sense even justify, all our tribulations. That is the liberation of the Russian Orthodox Church from captivity by the state, from that murderous conventionalism. Although persecuted, the Russian Church is now free. And a free Church will regenerate and gather the crumbled buildings blocks of Russian statehood. The key to an understanding of historical events should be sought in the internal and external fates of the Church. In this lies the inner lawfulness of historical events.

38. "I hate the vulgar mob, and keep them at a distance." *Ed.*

GENERAL: It seems that the Church itself was fairly well bolshevized during the revolution. Look what happened at Church conferences in various places in Russia.

WORLDLY DIVINE: That was only a superficial movement which seized the more unstable elements: a few reformed priests and Church S. D.'s—social-deacons, and social-*d'iaks* (clerics)—along with a few loudmouths from the laity. It would have been strange if it had not occurred. But now this can be considered almost liquidated. The wave of revolution broke on the threshold of the Church. The Church, humbly but firmly, has warded off the revolution. Look at what is happening at the Church Council.³⁹ If spiritual weapons for the rebirth of Russia are being forged anywhere, it is precisely there and only there.

DIPLOMAT: And I say again that if you seek those guilty of this national misfortune which is linked to the revolution, then the heaviest responsibility rests on the Russian Church. I do not even speak of the servility and silence of the upper hierarchy—everyone has had that shoved into his face. But here too the Church revealed its cultural indigence, and proved outright to be historically bankrupt. However little basis there is to believe daydreams about the God-bearing people, one might have expected that, over its thousand-year existence, the Church would be able to link itself with the popular soul and become necessary and dear to it. Yet it turned out that the Church was done away with without a struggle, as if it was neither dear nor necessary to the people; and this happened even more easily in the village than in the city. The layer of Church culture proved to be even thinner than the enemies of the Church had imagined. The Russian people suddenly turned out not to be Christian. There is reason for the American mission to be concerned for its instruction, just as *in partibus infidelium*.⁴⁰ And what should be said about the influence of the Church on the general way of life, on work discipline? What can Orthodoxy use here to counter all the Western creeds, particularly Protestantism, which is clearly triumphing in this war? The revolution has presented the Church with a terrible historical account. And I do not know whether she will be in any condition to pay it.

WORLDLY DIVINE: Like the majority of Russian society, you judge the Church from somewhere outside: the simple people—whom even Voltaire allowed to think about God—has its peasant Church. You coldly and haughtily give it an unsatisfactory grade on a history examination, which you yourself are failing even more hopelessly. And this is our main misfortune: the educated class has taken a position of irresponsible opposition to the Church. It only

39. After the collapse of the monarchy, the Church sought to reorganize along independent lines. An All-Russian Church Council (*Sobor*) convened in Moscow in August, 1917, and lasted into the next year. *Ed.*

40. "In pagan lands." *Ed.*

makes demands and finds fault, instead of placing itself in work harness and taking on itself its share of responsibility. Try to do this, and at once all your critical ardor will be extinguished; for difficult indeed is the labor of the Lord, and damned is the one who does it carelessly. I will answer you, that if you are right, and if the Church actually has not proven to be on top of its historical tasks, then only one practical conclusion can be drawn from this: that one must become more Churchminded than before and sense one's personal responsibility for the historic fates of the Church. Churchmindedness obliges.

GENERAL: Yes. Churchmindedness obliges one—and, above all, to truthfulness and sincerity. Therefore, it must still be said that all is not well with our Orthodoxy. It is debilitated by some inner ailment, the best proof of which is the revolution. Must we not take the revolution as a thunderous testament to the decline of Orthodoxy? The salt conquered and, as a result, the salted body began to disintegrate. Did the Church really have the right to renounce holy authority without a struggle? It committed a treason, of which, moreover, it washed its hands, and now it is being punished for this with persecution.

WORLDLY DIVINE: In principle, the Church does not renounce the idea of holy authority and Christian statehood even now; although it should have rejected a Rasputin-influenced tsar earlier, as soon as it became clear that Russia was being ruled with the inspirations of a *Khlyst*.⁴¹ In fact, this tolerance was the great sin of both the hierarchy and the laity. It was understandable, moreover, in view of the notorious paralysis of the Church, its subjugation to the state as Overprocurator. Thank God, the Church is now free and is ruled on the basis of its inherent principles of *sobornost*'.

GENERAL: But I just can't understand who can liberate the Church, except the Church itself, surely not the Provisional Government, or, pardon the expression, that Russian Republic. If there actually was an external paralysis of the Church, then it is internal as well; and I am not about to judge whether or not the Church has been cured of it. But that this paralysis existed is clear to me. At the most fatal moment in history, it could not protect the tsar from Rasputin! Where is the strength of the Apostolic Church, where is the power to decide and to bind? I am no mystic, but I can't escape the thought that the forces of evil were able to mobilize Rasputin because there was no counter-action. And there where the apostolic word should have resounded, the matter was decided by an officer's stray bullet. But it is impossible for a bullet to struggle with a mystical force. So it turned out that the blood of Rasputin was spilled on the Russian land, and it spawned the many-headed monster of Bolshevism, that social *Khlystism* with an obvious tinge of sadism.

41. This is another way of referring to the influence exerted on the royal family by Rasputin, considered here as a member of the sect of the *Khlysty*. *Ed.*

I don't know whether restoration of the conciliar structure alone can overcome this kind of paralysis.

WORLDLY DIVINE: These doubts can and should be answered, not with words, but only with deeds and sacrifice. Church life should be regenerated—right now this is the most important patriotic, cultural, and even political task in Russia. Only from there, from the spiritual center, can Russia be regenerated, and that is why I recognize our Council as the most important event of recent Russian history, particularly of the revolutionary epoch, with all its changes of decorations and party teapot tempests. I know the taste and price of everything: of politics, economics, and culture. But now I am decisively clerical, and for the good of the Church I am not burdened even by the kind of work for which I would not lift a finger, were it for the sake of this godless imperialism.

PUBLIC FIGURE: Frankly, I still do not understand what all-Russian significance the work of the Council can have, besides the purely professional interests of the clergy.

WORLDLY DIVINE: I will answer you with a paradox: in Russia only what is related to the Church, in the broadest sense of this concept, of course, has a cultural future. And hopes for a cultural renaissance of Russia must be linked with a reintroduction of the Church into Russian life. What is now going on, in grandiose proportions, is an experiment of godless "socialist" culture. And look at how powerless and unfruitful it turns out to be, in all areas, especially on the question most vital to it—work discipline. Everything has fallen through, worker "fitness" has declined, and nothing remains for its reestablishment except socialist coercion. Without Church education we can establish neither the national economy nor the state system. But my desires go further; I dream of a spiritual conquest of the Russian school, of its inner "clericalization," so to speak, so that this gap between the Church and secular education finally would be closed.

WRITER: I understand you. I agree that modestly and quietly, in a context of society's indifference, a matter of major importance goes on at the Council. May God help you in your work! Only one unresolved doubt stirs within me: to this day, as I see it, the Council acts like a Church constituent assembly, working out its own form of constitution. This, of course, is unavoidable in cleaning the ancient Augean stables, but I fear that what might result here would be a kind of Church Kadetism, a "constitutional-democratic" Orthodoxy. I must admit, I fear that neat, legal Orthodoxy. It would be very easy for clericalism of the most dangerous sort to make its nest there. How are we to avoid polishing out of our Orthodoxy the rough, "Black Hundred,"⁴² but nevertheless, vigorous, healthy, and endlessly dear old piety.

42. "Black hundred" as used here implies narrow-minded, obscurantist, and potentially violent. *Ed.*

WORLDLY DIVINE: Such fears can arise only from the side, from outside the atmosphere of the Council. That's just the point. More important and more essential than all of these tasks is the spirit of churchmindedness, our revitalization of the Church. What a joy it is—to sense the full reality of Church community, the full strength of the *sobor* unity of all elements of the Church: the Episcopacy, the clergy, and the laity. We have no reason to fear Church legalism. Besides, could you possibly not have noticed the beginnings of the Church revival, which will yet yield its fruits in a general revival of parish life? . . . Among the happiest days of my life was the 28th of January this year, the day of the national Procession of the Cross in Moscow, when, with the strength of prayerful enthusiasm, Easter song burst out on the winter street.⁴³ This willingness of crowds of thousands to suffer for the faith, to fall from the bullet. . . . With the blood of martyrs, the historical sins of the Church are cleansed and its garments made white.

WRITER: Yes, this is truly so. A powerful, new, saving, and curative force is entering Russian life. If only it would not recede as quickly as it arose. Unfortunately, this is in the Russian character, you know.

DIPLOMAT: It also seems to me that this religious revival should be evaluated with great caution. After all, it is evoked by the savage measures of the Bolsheviks, who placed the Church in a hopeless situation. Necessary self-defense inevitably evokes a corresponding reaction, and it is not by chance that these processions of the cross are so suggestive of demonstrations. They have a certain aftertaste of confusion and fright, scarcely noticeable amidst the general enthusiasm. In my view, both extremes are equally dangerous for the Church: catastrophic shock, as a consequence of persecution; and restoration, with the reestablishment of privileges for the Princes of the Church. After all, they all were raised by the old regime, which they dream about like a paradise lost.

WORLDLY DIVINE: The Church no longer fears any kind of restoration. It will not be sparing of freedom whose sweetness it has come to recognize; and it will not reject again its canonical structure, which was profaned during the synodal period. I hope that even for our higher clergy there is no longer any reversion to the past, when they were captives of their own situation, locked up in their arch-episcopal houses. Their meeting with the Church people has occurred, and the people will not allow them to withdraw. Indeed, they will not wish to separate themselves from the people. However, I cannot deny that Church growth needs the surge of force that is customary for free creative initiative, both among the clergy and among the laity. That is why a rap-

43. For a discussion of the background of this procession in the worsening relations of the Church and the Soviet state, see J. S. Curtiss, *The Russian Church and the Soviet State* (Boston: Little Brown, 1953), ch. 3. *Ed.*

prochement of the intelligentsia with the Church is now so important. Separated from the Church, the intelligentsia will perish; but neither will the Church cope with its immediate tasks without a surge of fresh forces. If this rapprochement occurs, a reaction is not to be feared. The Church will acquire independence and elasticity, together with skills for struggle, and will counteract new violence.

GENERAL: You expect figs from a burdock! No, it would be better to exclude the intelligentsia completely from your calculations. You must think how to manage with your own resources, without the intelligentsia. On the whole, it is difficult even to hope for a national movement towards the Church. At best, the Church will be surrounded by a ring of disbelief and indifference; while at worst, direct persecution may continue, although in socially acceptable forms, as in France. I am a military man, and practically I am accustomed to counting, not on the best, but on the worst. Be prepared for the catacombs, that's what! I am not good at these questions, of course, but I am also amazed that there are many who place some special hopes in parish reform, which in practice will lead only to its "democratization," that is, to domination by the street and to Church demagoguery.

WORLDLY DIVINE: But, in its struggle with violators, can the Church now rely on anything besides the people of the Church? Mobilization of the people is going on all over. The appearance of real Church democracy is one of the most significant phenomena of Russian life during the revolution.

REFUGEE: All the same, new wine can scarcely be poured into old wine-skins, and while the present parish is kept for the sake of convenience, it is not a vital Church unit. After all, the more vital members of the Church usually are not satisfied with the parish alone, but seek other forms of religious association. I even doubt whether, in general, there is any new wine in the "broad" Church, in its mass, or even at the Council which is a kind of show of Church strength. Perhaps my impressions of the Council are inadequate, but they tell me that although there was much piety and faithfulness to tradition there, and perhaps even old belief in its best and most positive sense, there was no religious impulse. Evidently there was even little taste for religious questions or concern for dogma. Is that really a Council? A Church constituent assembly—yes! And what else could there be? After all, in ruling and scholarly circles there prevails an essentially equal indifference to religious questions, masked either by pompous airs or old belief. They are satiated. There's no thirst, no alarm. Are examples needed? How did they treat the burning question of honoring the name of God? In essence, only with icy indifference—unless one mentions mixed-in personal pride. Was any attention paid to the grandiose phenomenon of mystical literature, to the "manuscripts" of A. N. Shmidt, which perhaps offer a key to the recent events of world history? What helplessness on the questions of occultism and anthropology in general! Admittedly, these are all individual examples, which can be

debated and excluded as heresy. But all the same, the fact remains that ~~within~~ the Council, as outside of it, flabbiness and sleepiness prevail in relation to dogma. Given this condition, we don't even have the right to claim it as a real Council, only as one convoked from above, unobstructed by the wish of the Overprocurator. Ecumenical Councils used to arise when Church life reached a boiling point, when the actual outcome could only be according to the formula "as will the Holy Ghost and we." But this is not a Council, it is merely an all-Russian Church congress, invested with extraordinary authority. Nothing more.

WORLDLY DIVINE: That's all completely untrue. It is easy to criticize, more so offhandedly on the basis of chance impressions, but one must enter into the very heart of the Council's work, participate day by day in the life of the Council, in order to appreciate all the uniqueness, intensity, fruitfulness, and swiftness of this work. I have taken part in various assemblies, both scholarly and political, and I assert that at no other assembly has there reigned such enlightenment, such conscientiousness, in general such "fitness." One can be cured of any skepticism regarding the fate of Russia by attending the sessions of the Council. And as for the apparent indifference to questions of dogma, well, everything in its time. We should first resolve the immediate tasks, sweep out of the temple the refuse accumulated over the ages, and then the time for questions of dogma will come. For that matter, in general, there are no non-dogmatic questions in Church life. Any question about its structure is linked with the fundamentals of Church dogma. Of course, at the Council there is not that nervousness, self-deception, and religious adventurism, so common among representatives of the "new consciousness," among various mystics, orgiastics, anthroposophists, theosophists, and the like. With them, a pursuit of piquancy not infrequently destroys a sense of reality. That would be the limit—for the Council to deliberate over their favorite questions on the "third testament," or on sex, for example. No, at the Council there must be no place for religious fanaticism.

REFUGEE: Indeed, they said a great deal about divorce, while there were essentially no deliberations on the mystery of marriage. No doubt, everything is sufficiently clear in the catechism.

WORLDLY DIVINE: Yes, everything is sufficiently clear, so long as you don't impose a fog of Khlystism or various "third testament" heresies.

REFUGEE: But all the same, I stand by my statement that present-day Orthodoxy is like Old Belief and is deaf to the questions posed to it by life itself. I do not condemn Old Belief, on the contrary, I find that in a certain respect the Church must become more like Old Belief itself, that is, bound by holy tradition according to which everything is equally important and essential. In this, the Old Believers are right in principle. But, for the Church as militant and present in history, Old Belief alone would be a forcible stoppage of time. This is the very situation our Old Believers fell into. For them, Church history

ends in the seventeenth century, and beyond that, its place is taken by Church archaeology. It is a tragic situation, which perhaps the Old Believers have not yet recognized in all its acuteness.

WORLDLY DIVINE: I just don't understand what you are talking about. No new events have occurred in Church life, all this political stir and even catastrophe has not reached the heart of Church life. And, in general, to the end of the world, Orthodoxy will remain, as it is, the "single, *sobor*, Apostolic Church."

REFUGEE: Of course, the single *sobor*, Apostolic Church will abide up to the end of time. But whether present-day Greco-Russian Orthodoxy is adequate for that is hardly beyond question. I myself propose that, in fact, we have already gone beyond the limits of *historical* Orthodoxy, and that a new epoch has begun in the history of the Church, an epoch at least as different from that which preceded it, as, for example, the Constantine epoch differs from that which came before it. This same Constantine epoch ended for Byzantium in 1453, and for the entire Orthodox Church on 2 March 1917. The fall of autocracy is a dividing line in the history of the Church, and it seems that no restoration of the German type can erase it.

WORLDLY DIVINE: You repeat the widespread prejudice that Orthodoxy and autocracy are linked together, just as it is alleged by the Black Hundreds or by the open enemies of the Church, by the politicking writers like Merezhkovskii, who carried on a flirtation with revolution until it actually showed its teeth. There is absolutely no link between Orthodoxy and autocracy, except the historical one, and this has been clearly confirmed now that Orthodoxy has finally received its freedom, and no one can reproach it for an alliance with autocracy.

REFUGEE: But all the same a link did exist, not just an external but an internal, mystical one, and this corresponds to the age-old self-conception of Orthodoxy, from St. Constantine to the present. The Church concentrated special love on its anointed one, as the beloved bridegroom of the Church from the line of David. Look closely at the liturgy, which is now maimed from mechanical amputations, and apart from the courtly rhetoric and servility, you will sense this mystical love. The Church recognized that in "the external episcopate," "the vicar of God on earth," it had the architect of the City of God, the keeper of the garden of the Church. Orthodoxy did not see its historic mission of creating the kingdom of God on earth in any other way. When Byzantium fell, the mantle of Monomakh was transferred to the midnight lands, and our pious ancestors with full justification recognized Moscow as the "Third Rome."

WORLDLY DIVINE: You foist the dogma of autocracy onto Orthodoxy and ascribe to it the heresy of Caesaropapism, or Papocaesarism, the Latin lie. That did appear in history as an abuse and a connivance, but it was never elevated to dogma, as in Catholicism. To courtly etiquette, which unfortunately

penetrated the liturgy as well, you ascribe a major significance which it does not have.

REFUGEE: If one considers as dogma only that which was given formulation at ecumenical Councils, then, of course, it is not only impossible to speak of the dogmatic basis of autocracy, but of many Church teachings which have undisputed dogmatic significance, for example, the veneration of the Mother of God, the mysteries, and many others. One can scarcely dispute that autocracy was given, not only practical religious significance, but also dogmatic significance in the history of Orthodoxy. Without this assumption, the history of Byzantium becomes completely unintelligible, particularly the history of the ecumenical Councils at which certain *Church* rights were recognized as the tsars', and so too does the entire history of Russian autocracy. The Church glorifies St. Constantine as "the first tsar in Christendom to receive his sceptre from God," and conceives of him as an organ of theocracy. But why go so far back? You know how this question was posed by us not long ago in the ex-communication proceedings that took place during the week of Orthodoxy.

WORLDLY DIVINE: Does it matter what cluttered up our divine service during the Imperial period? What are all these endless prayers for the dead worth by themselves? And how the divine service shines now, when there is no more of this; like an icon which has been cleaned and liberated from age-old soot and dirt.

REFUGEE: We cannot consider everything that displeases us as an abuse, however. Thus these anathemas enumerate the main dogmatic heresies which troubled and shook the Church—the Aryan, Macedonian, and so on. But among these under number 11 stands the following: "Anathema be those who would think that Orthodox rulers ascend the throne not through God's blessing of them, or that in annointment there do not pass unto them the gifts of the Holy Spirit for the passage of this great knowledge; and those who would dare to rebel against or betray them."

WORLDLY DIVINE: Undoubtedly, this anathema is of political origin, because with wise decisiveness it already has been excised by the new Church authority.

REFUGEE: However, now there are also those who propose that Russia brought this anathema upon itself, and who see in this the prime cause of all our misfortunes, because anathema is not uttered in passing, it is not an empty word which falls powerless in the air.

GENERAL: That's true. I wasn't able to express this, but all along I have sensed hazily that something fatal hangs over Russia. And this found its most clear expression in the fate of the army and its leaders. Just look at how the mystical power of an oath is sensed even by a godless government, which also concocted a "socialist oath," quite in accordance with the Apocalypse—the "imprint of the beast."

DIPLOMAT: You are prepared to give serious significance to a childish pro-

pensity towards pomp and buffoonery. And you also fantasize as regards the mystical significance of an oath. Only under the influence of mystical prejudices can one reproach the generals, who suffered so from a variety of "spheres." They had to sacrifice even their monarchism, out of love for the motherland.

GENERAL: And for that sacrifice, they suffered instant retribution, together with the army. Learn to heed the voice of history.

WORLDLY DIVINE: All the same, I see nothing mystical in the union of Orthodoxy and autocracy. Orthodoxy flowered, not only in Moscow, but in the Northern Russian republics, where a great surge of national creativity was realized: icon painting and church building. It lived under Batu, it lived under the Sultan, just as now under the Bolsheviks. And it is possible to link its fate with autocracy only by closing ones eyes to its history.

REFUGEE: You point to the provincial centers of Orthodoxy that exist with the center, but the main line does not go through them. From the time of Constantine, Orthodoxy had a universal-historical task—to found an Orthodox theocracy, as unified as the Church. That was the drift of the idea of the Second and Third Rome. Even Papal power, with its desire for universal hegemony, came to strive for the same thing. The great Church schism came about on this ground. On the paths of theocracy, the high priest-tsar and the tsar-high priest met as competitors. Here it is not a matter of the ambitions of the Pope, or of schemes of Caesaropapism, but of the plan for the construction of the City of God. Inexorable history cancelled out both the western and the eastern intentions in a like manner. The destruction of western ecclesiastical rule occurred long ago; that of the eastern has just been accomplished. The great struggle of East and West is now exhausted and abolished. In 1917, the Constantine epoch of Church history ended, and the next period, which has its analogy in the epoch of persecutions and the catacomb existence of the Church, has begun.

DIPLOMAT: It is still to be feared that it is not entirely over, if we have to undergo the charms of restoration, *germanis auxiliis*,⁴⁴ of course. Moreover, our new "theocracy" of the Petersburg period, even without that, was half German, and that means half mixed with the leaven of Protestantism.

REFUGEE: I don't deny the possibility that we may have a restoration of a bourgeois-constitutional monarchy of the Prussian type, with all the decorum of "a legal state." But this would be only the final state in the decline of the great "holy empire," of "the Orthodox tsardom." It has collapsed and can be regenerated only from the depths of Church consciousness. All the same, the historical boundary was drawn here by Rasputin, with his mission as a false prophet. We have not yet fully evaluated the mystical sense and significance of Rasputin's appearance.

44. "With the aid of the Germans." *Ed.*

WORLDLY DIVINE: But you're fabricating to please a sick, mystical fantasy, which sees the Apocalypse where only sexual psychopathology is appropriate. And, in terms of religion, I do not see any difference between the old monarchy and a restoration, if only that were possible. That is a question of political expediency, which I do not judge here, but the Church must always preserve its freedom and independence from the state in any political structure. Even from considerations of political wisdom, the state must naturally extend cooperation to the Church in the achievement of its goals; but the Church must not go beyond simple correctness towards the state, never again tolerating the romance of servility, and by no means taking for itself a new "bridegroom," as you would say.

REFUGEE: Yes, indeed, but that will no longer be Orthodoxy, as it has been up to this time.

WRITER: But where is your Orthodoxy headed? You understand it in an unusual way all your own.

REFUGEE: I really think that Orthodoxy in the precise Church-historical sense has neither a future, nor a present, but only a past. We are already beyond its boundary. With the fall of the Orthodox tsardom, it received a mortal wound, one that should be admitted right off. Theocracy in the form of a holy empire did not succeed, more accurately, its significance proved to be only preliminary, transfiguring, but not conclusive. And do you know what? This means that the old Greek-Roman feud has already lost its acuteness. For it arose originally not out of dogma, but from a different understanding of the paths to theocracy. And both Churches followed their own paths to their conclusions, reached dead ends, and suffered failure, provided one can consider as failure, any lawful development which plays itself out to the end. In this sense, if you will, one could declare the entire historical process as a failure, which, of course, would be wrong. That is why the old question of unifying the Churches arises before us now with such a freshness and fascination, the question to which we are summoned and obliged by the threatening historical time approaching for all Christendom.

WORLDLY DIVINE: Yes, this is just time for the Jesuit fathers to fish in troubled waters. It is not by chance that the Uniate Church is spreading in the Ukraine, according to the plan conceived long ago by Sheptitskii and the Austro-German general staff. Now more than ever, a war with Catholicism is necessary, and however little I can sympathize with the anathematizing of Catholicism, which they say was proclaimed at the Kievan Council by Metropolitan Antonius, one must admit, that against a Sheptitskii you need a Khrapovitskii.

REFUGEE: Aren't they both, Sheptitskii and Khrapovitskii, rather representatives of the past, of an already dying epoch? A common enemy approaches all of Christianity, in the face of which Orthodoxy and Catholicism can do nothing. Differences of dogma never had any decisive significance, they can and must be smoothed over with a sincere and loving desire to understand

each other. In essence, Catholicism, like Orthodoxy, is no longer what it used to be. Something is happening here, evident only to a few individuals; a new sense of the ecumenical Church is being born. If this feeling broadens and deepens, then of their own the endless disputes, the whole libraries written for this purpose, will lose their force. Everything will weaken before the elemental attraction toward unity in Christ.

WORLDLY DIVINE: I admit that I don't understand you at all in this. After all, this is the same internationalism, merely under a different guise. The first to begin preaching it to us were the Russian Jesuits and in general those who Catholicized, Chaadaev, for example. Then, rather unexpectedly, Dostoevskii, who in his own way generally knew the true value of Catholicism, extended his hand to them in his Pushkin speech. Finally the liberals and the Marxists right up to our present-day comrades took it up. Now once again, you preach inter-confessional brotherhood, at a time when we need to protect the front from an insidious enemy.

REFUGEE: That's just the point, the front should not be directed there. The real enemy is attacking both these fragmented and therefore weakened fronts.

WORLDLY DIVINE: What is it you want—a lack of credal differentiation or a union, the now fashionable “Eastern rite Catholicism?”

REFUGEE: Neither one, nor the other. I find that it is necessary to be more Churchminded now than ever before, because nothing is so punished as groundlessness in the Church. And, if you will, I am practically a cleric, who values each iota in Orthodoxy. For only from the fullness of life in the Church, and not from sects and salons, can one expect the spirit of prophecy and the fulness of achievements. One must be absolutely church-minded, both in the sense of external discipline (for one cannot allow oneself such experiments in arbitrary unification of the churches as that of Vl. Solov'ev, with his secret adherence to Catholicism while simultaneously remaining in Orthodoxy) and in the sense of inner fidelity and of ardent, intense, demanding, and exacting love. This is exactly what the Slavophiles lacked. They were chivalrously and nobly true to Orthodoxy, but nevertheless they remained too calm and satisfied. And satiety is not fullness and blessedness.

WORLDLY DIVINE: That religious neurasthenia which is the distinguishing feature of contemporary Khlystism was really foreign to steadfast fighters for Orthodoxy such as Khomiakov and the other Slavophiles. It seems to me that precisely the spirit of Khomiakov hovers over the Church Council, confirming in it composure, stability, and calm, joyful clarity.

REFUGEE: You are even more correct in this than you yourself realize. But precisely this supports my thought that in some basic way the Council does not stand at the peak of contemporary times, but remains behind it. The banner of Khomiakov and of all the Slavophiles belongs to a past historical epoch. Firm soil, the family ancestral structure, a sound way of life—all this

became shaky, as in an earthquake; everything has melted and is fusing in the fire.

WORLDLY DIVINE: You speak of Salvophilism as if it were some kind of spiritual corpse which has not completely decayed. Indeed, on the whole, such an attitude towards the historical Church seems simply blasphemous to me, and I would prefer direct hostility to such condescension. Generally it is better to deal with overt enemies, than with the self-willed who deceptively take refuge in Churchmindedness.

REFUGEE: How can I answer you? Should I confess unlimited devotion to the Church? I consider this inappropriate. However, I also take the very fact that Orthodoxy is undergoing a certain crisis as a sign of its vitality. I believe, and with God's help will believe to my dying hour, that Church truth has been preserved pure and unscathed in Eastern Orthodoxy, and that the Russian Church will shine with irresistible beauty and unconquerable strength. From it will come light to save the whole world. I also recognize, through my historical common sense, that the Orthodox Church in Russia is the first and now even the only bulwark of national and cultural consciousness, and that directly or indirectly, all the best forces of the country must be given over to its service and in one way or another must be "oriented" to it. We will be taught this by difficult trials, which compel us to rally around the Church, just as partitioned Poland united around the Roman Catholic Church. And the Russian Church will be confronted by great tasks in the area of cultural creation as well. It must bless the Russian genius anew. However, I sense that to do this it must both overcome its own isolation and quickly sense the division of the Churches as a wound to the living body of the Church. Beginning with the fatal tenth century, something precious was lost by both the East and by the West, which can and must be restored.

WORLDLY DIVINE: But what do you leave as the lot of the Eastern Church, which you believe is crippled by division? Only the task of self-abolition through unification, dissolution in the elements of Romanism, which is more harmful and dangerous than even Germanism?

REFUGEE: The Russian Church, as no other among the local churches, is filled with troubled expectations and a thirst for Apocalyptic achievements. Sinful, godless, and decayed Russia will find strength in itself for the lamentations of the prudent bandit in the final hour of history, for, in spite of everything, she remains the country of holy miracles. Here will flash the white ray of Universal Transfiguration.

DIPLOMAT: *Quod erat demonstrandum: inimicitiae temporales, amicitiae sempiternae,*⁴⁵ the touching unity of all Slavophile hearts. My God, can it be that everything that is happening to Russia is unable to liberate Russian heads

45. "That which is to be demonstrated (Q.E.D.): enmities are temporary, friendships are eternal." *Ed.*

from the Slavophile fog? Sometimes it really seems to me that this dreaminess is more harmful, more poisonous, than even the socialist delirium. It defeats our will, it plunges us into contemplative quietism. Truly, only German gauntlets will knock these eastern chimeras out of us and instill sobriety. Here is the real cause of the Russian crisis.

VI CONCLUSION

“A woman, enveloped in sun.”

—The Apocalypse

REFUGEE: Why do you see only the fall of a conquered Russia, but at the same time apparently forget what is happening with the whole world? Are we not witnesses to a general catastrophe, to the collapse of all “modern history”?

DIPLOMAT: One should avoid these tragic exaggerations. More than once Europe has lived through crises and has emerged from them revived. Normal life is being restored in Europe even now, yes, and even in Russia it is being restored; we need only rid ourselves of this *Pugachevism* and *Manilovism*.

REFUGEE: But I think that in general the old way of life is not being restored, and it would be too great an absurdity, a failure of history, if everything were simply restored. To grasp, no matter what, for fragments of the past, is the same as clinging to the boards of a battered ship. Of course, in Russia a comparatively calm way of life can be restored, but this would be only a “breathing space,” which would have to be taken advantage of appropriately. The whole world is transforming into a fiery mass, and there is no place to hide from the impact of the violent waves.

DIPLOMAT: But any great war gives birth to the same kind of world view. Remember 1812, even then the lovers of eschatology and the Apocalypticists of the day awaited the end of the world. As a result, they got the Holy Alliance and the universal flowering of capitalism. Something like that has to happen now as well, and it is sufficiently clear from which elements this world will arise.

REFUGEE: Any great war is also really a prototype, and a kind of historical dress rehearsal for the universal deluge. But can it be that history really knows events similar in breadth and significance to those of the present?

DIPLOMAT: And besides, they are still not universal. The yellow world has not really been drawn into the conflict, and this seems unlikely in the near future. India stands to the side. For Europe, everything will still “turn out all right”—but will it turn out all right for Russia?

REFUGEE: For some reason, I am reminded of how at the very beginning of the war I was forced to evacuate with the others, from Poland. Before us

rolled the waves of a great resettlement of peoples. And, involuntarily, it occurred to me that the time was approaching when all would feel themselves, in greater or lesser degree, to be refugees, cast out from the familiar nest, homeless and—free. The whole world goes over into flight—how can one not recall here the primordial presentiments of our refugees? And, in our truly traditionless and destitute intelligentsia, whom you curse, there is this sensation of flight which seeks after an unearthly city. If only it would recover its sight and understand what it really desires.

GENERAL: No, excuse me, this gives too much credit; our intelligentsia is made up of renegades and emigrants, but not refugees. They have no sense of the motherland, no sense of the land.

REFUGEE: What you say is partly true, only immaterial in the final analysis. All the same, the intelligentsia desires that which only the Transfiguration can give, although in its blindness it expects this from revolution. But in this desire, it is one with the people. Of course, the intelligentsia has not yet shed its diapers, it has not yet finished with childish rebelliousness, and it does not know itself. But without it, Russia, I'll say even further the Russian Church, will not reveal that which it has been called to reveal.

WORLDLY DIVINE: Yes, but meanwhile the intelligentsia is still the most conservative, old-believing class, which stubbornly clings to old, already outworn socialist dogmas. To use your words, it must become a refugee from itself; it must die worthily in time, so that when reborn it will bear ample fruit.

WRITER: I like your thought about the beginning of an epoch of universal flight. The air smells of ozone from electric discharges. It is terrifying, and, if you will, frightening, but at the same time gay, like getting drunk, giving in to a delightful giddiness. This reminds me a little of the sensations of sailing in a boat on a sea in a good wind. The noise of the waves, the foam and the spray, the smell of salt water, the sparkle of the sea, the quick run . . . thrill the spirit. You know that any minute your boat might overturn, yet you feel like singing, shouting, acting like a schoolboy. Well, in a word, you can't express this better than Pushkin:

Everything, everything that threatens destruction
For the mortal heart conceals
Inexplicable delight.

It is difficult to be the contemporary of great events, to be a guest at the feast of the Gods, but we who are deemed worthy of this election will be envied by generations who have lived in a calmer epoch.

PUBLIC FIGURE: But in what garments have we appeared at this feast? Russia, O, my Russia! What has been done to you? What do I care for this feast of the Gods, if Russia is expelled from it, like one without wedding attire? What are universal-historical perspectives to me, if in them I see the de-

composing corpse of my Russia? I do not want the world without Russia, I will not accept a universal Transfiguration without her. After all, Dostoevskii told us, that she was "a woman, enveloped in sun," and we alone have the solemn midnight service of the Resurrection of Christ. No, all is lost if Russia is lost, all history has failed and has spilled into a gaping hole.

WRITER: Why do you seek the living among the dead? Why do you show so little faith? Our Russia lives, and as of old the Russian Christ in slavish, profaned guise, without a glimmer of goodness, walks about her. Not the Christ that Blok portrayed, not "snowlike and above the storm," but the radiant gardener in His sacred garden. He calls with a quiet voice, "Maria!" and just then the Russian soul will hear the sacred call and, with a cry of insane joy, will fall at the feet of its teacher. . . . We have nothing except this faith, nothing except this hope. But the Russian land knows this, and it will save the Russian people; on Russian land the feet of the Mother of God have trod. . . .

REFUGEE: Just before the October overturn I chanced to hear the confession of a man close to me. With great agitation and tender emotion he told how, during a time of intense prayer before the revealed image of the Mother of God, suddenly, with complete clarity, there sounded in his heart, "*Russia is saved.*" How, what, why? He does not know, but to betray this moment, to doubt in its significance, would mean for him to forget something most cherished and precious. It means, provided my friend did not make it up, that we need not fear for Russia in the final, and only important, ultimate sense, for Russia is saved—by the power of the Mother of God. And, you may trust, all of Orthodox Russia is firmly convinced of this.

ALL (Except the Diplomat): Amen.

DIPLOMAT: ???!

STATESMAN: Christ is risen!

ALL (Except the Diplomat): Christ is truly risen!

April-May 1918

Moscow

Our Language

"Russia exists spiritually. . . . It was conceived in the thought of God. To destroy God's design is not within the powers of evil, human will."¹ Thus, recently, wrote one of those patriots who is obviously saved from despair at the sight of the torn chasuble of the fatherland only by a faith in the whole seamless tunic, for which lots can be cast, but which cannot be divided. . . .² Our language gives particular evidence of the truth of the above words.

I

In the profound opinion of Wilhelm Humboldt, language is simultaneously a deed and an active force (*ergon* and *energia*);³ the medium of the community that is constantly being created by all in common, and which forewarns and conditions any creative act in the very cradle of its design; the antinomial combination of necessity and freedom, of the divine and the human; the creation of the popular spirit and God's gift to the people. According to Humboldt, language is a gift, furnished to the people as a destiny, as a certain pre-determination of its future spiritual mode of existence.

Great and wonderful is the gift of language prepared by Providence for our people. Worthy of marvel is the richness of this language; its versatility; its majesty; its euphony; its tonal and rhythmic plasticity; its direct, broadly encompassing, precise, powerful brevity and artistic expressiveness; its freedom in the composition and the arrangement of words; and the manifold character of its harmony and pitch of speech, which expresses elusive nuances of mental attitude. No less worthy of marvel than the forms of the entire organism, are the fabrics which form it—the qualities and particularities inherent in its verbal composition, such as: the harmoniousness and vividness of its morphology; the clarity of its primary roots; the abundance and subtlety of its suffixes and prefixes, the ancient magnificence of its inflections; the variety

1. The words of N. A. Berdiaev.

2. The Gospel according to John 19, 23-24.

3. Ivanov is not quite accurate in this reference to Humboldt, who said that language is an activity or active force *rather* than a deed. "*Sie selbst ist kein Werk (ergon), sondern eine Tätigkeit (energia)*." For an English translation, see Wilhelm von Humboldt, *Linguistic Variability and Intellectual Development*, trans. George C. Buck and Frithjof A. Raven (Philadelphia: Univ. of Pennsylvania Press, 1971). *Ed.*

of its verb aspects; and the energy of its verbs in the aorist tense, unknown to other living languages.

But all this is still little! The language which acquired such an abundant share at its very birth, was again blessed in its infancy, through a mysterious baptism in the life-creating streams of the Church Slavic language. These partially transfigured its flesh and spiritually transformed its soul, its "inner form." And thus, it is no longer a simple gift of God to us, but it is like a two-fold and double gift of God, replete and augmented. In the hands of the God-inspired sculptors of the Slavic soul, Saints Cyril and Methodius, Church Slavic speech became a living replica of "Divine Hellenic speech," whose image and likeness the ever-memorable Enlighteners incorporated into their sculptures.

Their inscrutable task seems truly divine, for in it we see how the true nature of the Slavic word spontaneously and lovingly laid itself bare to the inspiration fertilizing it. We see how freely it submitted to the highest and most spiritual forms imposed upon it, declining some of them as foreign to itself, and, in return, from its very self, giving birth to the required correspondences, losing neither its lexical purity, nor the innate particularities of its primordial constitution. Instead, it acquired its inner perfection and abundance of vital forces, along with the gift of historical, spiritual childbearing, in happy and blessed marriage with the Hellenic world.

II

As a result of the early assimilation of numerous influences and deposits of Church Slavic speech, our language is now unique among the modern languages for the depth of the impression made in its independent and unalloyed, ardent, true nature by the spirit, image, and order of Hellenic speech, of the Hellenic "letter." Through it, we are invisible co-participants in antiquity itself. Hellenic thought and beauty are not beyond or external to our national genius, but internally congenial to it; we are no longer barbarians, since we possess our own speech, and, in it, through the succession the Orthodox tradition we have the tradition of Hellenism.

And just as the all-embracing, "ecumenical," "Catholic" language of Hellenism is supra-abundantly multifaceted, so too does our language become universal and all-human in spirit, so too does our language acquire the capacity to combine clarity with depth, objective tangibility with the most subtle, most sublime, spirituality—

It is good to think about the earth.
Bathing in the mystical haze. . . .

It was natural for such a language to overflow its admittedly broad, but nonetheless historically contained banks, in a turbid search for the world-

wide expanse. It possessed an expansive and collective will; it was bannered with the mark of a supranational, synthetic, all-unifying purpose. Nothing Slavic is foreign to it, it is placed amidst the Slavic languages like a certain focal receptacle, open to everything that comprises the generic heritage of the great tribe.

With such a language, the Russian dominion grew easily and spontaneously, marking the gradually achieved measure of its organic growth by lighting symbolic constellations of churches on the outskirts of the tsardom. With such a language, our people could not help but be filled with faith in the religious, universal cause awaiting it.

Just as it seemed to Schopenhauer that true verse is predetermined by the epoch, and conceived in the true nature of a language, so it seems both any brilliant, nationally distinctive, speculation and any flourishing sanctity are sown into it from time immemorial. Both Pushkin and St. Sergius Radonezhskii find, not only the forms of their inner experience, but the first secret urges to the feat before them, under the living boughs of the native "tree of language," which nourishes its roots in Mother Earth, but which raises its crown into the fine ether of Sophia's sky.

III

And now, in these days of violent blindness, obsession, and frenzy, what do we see?

Our language is holy: yet it is blasphemously defiled with an impious helionism—by incredible, senseless, uncanonical word formations, on the border of articulate speech, comprehensible only as a halloo between confederates, as a mindless battle cry.⁴ Our language is rich: yet for a long time now some people have wanted to impoverish it, to reduce it to the bare essentials, the utilitarian, the mechanically expedient; for a long time now they have been forgetting and shredding it to bits—and for good measure they have forgotten and lost it. Our language is free: yet some people castrate and tame it, they break its natural posture with foreign regimentation and mutilate its gait. Our language is majestic and broadwinged: yet how diligently some people clip its wings, and how they are dashed aside by each unfettered sweep of its monumental wings!

As used by the educated strata of society, our language long ago squandered its primordial property which Potebnia called "the inner form of the word." That inner form shriveled in the word, which was depleted in its core like a decayed nut, and transformed into a conventional token of exchange, well provided with an available stockpile of concepts. As an instrument for the ne-

4. See Bulgakov, note 14 above. *Ed.*

cessities of everyday exchange of concepts and run-of-the-mill literature, the language of our scholars is no longer the living oak wood of popular speech, but the cast-iron type-set of the printer.

And this perception of language, as an instrument, comprises the psychological underpinnings of the notorious orthographic reform.

IV

Our language is imprinted in graceful letters: yet some people devise a new writing system which is ostensibly simplified, but in fact more belabored—insofar as it is less distinct, like a worn-out coin—a writing system which violates the successively developed proportionality and completeness of the language's graphic forms that reflect like a true mirror its morphological structure. But we revere a sense of form; a variety of forms is contrary to the principle of all-effacing equality. Can continuity be cherished by a mindset that considers hatred as the only standard of effective might, and rupture as the first condition of creativity?

The divine words, "The Sabbath for Man, and not Man for the Sabbath," we interpret in a slavish, rather than a divine or human way: if these words took the Sabbath away from Man, the image of Man would be diminished by them; but, on the contrary, for the first time they grant Man the Lord's Sabbath, and only in his divine image does Man arise above the Sabbath. Thus, any spiritual obedience is transformed into spiritual power. The law regulating right relations in great matters also is true in small matters: the greater the regulation, the less the destructive tyranny and forcible coercion.

It is absurd to operate on the assumption that any skill to be assimilated in school may change depending on the conditions for that assimilation, or must adapt itself to those conditions. Skill is subject to the school, while the latter is free to determine its attitude toward skill, to find the measure corresponding to its goals of assimilation. Strictly speaking, full practical mastery of the orthography of a language is obligatory only for the typographical corrector, just as mastery of calligraphy is the job of scribes, but both of these arts are values in and of themselves. Absurd also is the idea that the best school with regard to literacy would be a school completely devoid of any concern for the writing system. For the writing system (that is, one correctly taught) is the means to a more profound understanding of the language, the beginning of its being realized through reflection, and an inducement to the artistic admiration of its beauty. In a certain sense, study of the rules of the writing system can be equated to the study of anatomy in sculpture or painting studios. Consequently, it is also education, if one must recognize the development of patriotism as one of the tasks of education.

In relation to aesthetics, an elementary musical sense, for example, prescribes the preservation of the "hard sign" to signify that irrational semi-vowel

sound, similar to an overtone or the shortest pause, in words of our language that seek lapidary closedness, words that are overburdened with consonant sounds, often even ending in whole clusters of consonants and therefore requiring the support of the mute semi-vowel letter, to which, undoubtedly, some phonic significance belongs as well. On the whole, it would be appropriate to pass judgment on the phonic condition of living popular speech (for example, to deny the distinction in sound between *e* and *h*.) only on the basis of the strictest and absolutely universal research, with the aid of sensitive apparatus that automatically illustrate its most subtle particularities and distinctions.

From the point of view of the interests of culture, which, in essence, must be understood primarily as bequest and continuity, a refinement of the writing system (for example, restoration of the delineation of "tense") is just as desirable—as the demands for the predetermination of the direction of reforms, and the subjecting of them to some kind of purpose (utilitarian or otherwise), are dangerous. We can only imagine what consequences would have ensued for the spiritual life of all mankind from a change in the Hellenic writing system, during the Byzantine period, when the fixation on writing was predominant over phonetism (more precisely, iotacism). The key that opens the way for us into the treasures of antiquity would have been lost for a long time, if not forever, and, perhaps, only the most recent breakthroughs in epigraphy would have permitted us somehow to grope along dark, hidden paths into the enchanted region of sacred ruins. While phonic transcription of contemporary English speech would have made English-speaking negroes—in principle at any rate—fully privileged successors and bearers of the British name.

V

Our language is indissolubly hybrid with words of the Church: yet we would like to secularize it.⁵ In similar fashion, the handymen of modern Ukrainian literature grab Polish words by the handful, only to squeeze out and uproot Church Slavic locutions from the dialect they have transformed into an independent language. Our linguists are right, of course, in taking pride in the successful solution of the purely scientific task of isolating the indigenous Russian component parts of our bi-hypostatic language. But theoretical separation of Russian and Church Slavic elements in no way justifies arbitrary innovations, supposedly "in the Russian spirit,"⁶ and the general preoccupation

5. Prof. P. N. Sakulin, in his book defending the new simplified writing system, justifies the reform precisely as the "secularization" of the writing system.

6. Examples of such innovations, amazing in their creative sweep, can be found in the same book by Prof. Sakulin: see, if nothing else, the resolution of the question about the spelling of adjectives in the nominative and accusative plural of the three genders.

with practical provincialism, which is what we must call the desire to narrow the great receptacle of our universal glory, to Russify—laughable as it sounds!—living Russian speech. They themselves know only too well that, so long as our speech resounds, there will also ring within it, as an inherent native strain that cannot be removed, those distant words once sung over its cradle, such as “birth” (*rozhdenie*), and the “resurrection” (*voskresenie*), “power” (*vlast’*) and “glory” (*slava*), “beatitude” (*blazhenstvo*) and “pleasure” (*sladost’*), “gratitude” (*blagodarnost’*) and “hope” (*nadezhda*). . . .⁷

No, the Russian language cannot be secularized in its depths! And it is sufficient for people who are speechless about their own language, and who mumble only that which is analysed according to a foreign stamp, it is sufficient for them to speak in their own way, in Russian, to recall Mother damp-Earth with her profound truth, and God on high with His law.

7. I have included these transliterations because Ivanov chose these words for their sound as well as their meaning. *Ed.*

*Socialism, Culture
and Bolshevism*

I

Will the present events at least be a storm to clear the air and enlighten consciousness? Or will these days and months, so full of excruciating anxiety, pass, and those people who call themselves the Russian intelligentsia, those who teach the Russian masses by word and letter, return to their old ways? I believe that anyone who has not yet despaired of Russia, who still believes that "Russia will live," is troubled most of all by this question. We were given the first warning in the years 1905-06. At that time, few understood the meaning of the omens so menacing for the state that were revealed. Now we have been dealt a second blow, immeasurably more powerful than the first. The question of whether Russia exists has received a terribly real meaning. Russia, in its present condition, broken up into separate pieces, deprived of an outlet to the sea, of its wheat granaries, of its national government—Russia with industries destroyed, with tens of billions in completely worthless paper money, with shaken bases of national labor—such a Russia cannot exist. But, if a miracle occurs and the country is resurrected, if by the force of gravity at first not all, but parts, of the fragmented whole unite, could this embryo of a resurrected state live and develop, grow and gain strength? To a significant degree, this depends on the ideas of the governing and ruling groups. Experience has proven to us that without or apart from the intelligentsia it is impossible to create a viable government. But, from the same experience, we know that the intelligentsia, raised on false and impracticable ideas, serves as a powerful weapon, not for the creation, but for the destruction of the state.

Has the Russian intelligentsia understood the full, menacing meaning of the events we have experienced? Has it learned the necessary lessons? In the present circumstance, when all structures have been washed away by the elemental flood, and there is not yet the physical possibility of undertaking the creation of new ones, it is difficult to give an exact, objective answer to this question. But, reading what is written, listening to what is said in circles of the intelligentsia, you sometimes begin to despair. "They have forgotten nothing, and have learned nothing." But if that is so, if the intellectual baggage of the Russian intelligentsia remains the same, even after 1917-18, then it is clear that even if the ship of state were saved now, guided by such helmsmen, it would be smashed to bits by a third blow. The main cause of the present, unprecedented devastation of our state lies in the fact that the intelligentsia com-

pletely misunderstood the nature of man and the force of the motives that direct him, the nature of society and of the state, and the conditions necessary for their strengthening and development. Our intelligentsia composed for itself fantastic, false and erroneous conceptions about man, society, and the state. It used them as weapons in the struggle with autocracy. While autocratic power was strong, this struggle took place on the surface, without penetrating into the midst of the people. But monarchical authority, being internally cut off from the people and resting on a narrow basis of several thousand noble landowners, was not capable of withstanding the burden of the greatest war in history. The monarchy collapsed with amazing swiftness. The Russian intelligentsia in the person of its political parties was forced to transform itself instantly from opposition into organs of authority. This is where it was overtaken by a bankruptcy which makes one forget even the failure of the monarchy. All the main political, socio-economic, and psychological ideas, which for a century nourished the Russian intelligentsia, turned out to be false and fatal to the people. The role of critic was played, not by certain literati, but by life itself. There is no higher authority. There is no appeal from the criticism of life. The Bolsheviks and their rule embodied in themselves all of this criticism of life. In vain, the intelligentsia tries to save itself with evasion, as if it were not responsible for the Bolsheviks. No, it is responsible for all of their actions and thoughts. The Bolsheviks have consistently only done all the things that others had spoken of and pushed towards. They have only placed the dot over the "i," opened the parentheses, and carried out all the conclusions to the premises more or less eloquently established by others. In good conscience we must admit that under every one of their decrees the Bolsheviks could cite excerpts from the writings, not only of Marx and Lenin, but of all the Russian socialists and sympathizers, both Marxist and *narodnik*. The only objection made to the Bolsheviks from that quarter boiled down, essentially, to stipulations not to act so rashly or so quickly, not to seize everything at once. These were not objections out of principle, but the reservations of cowardly opportunism. Chkheidze, Chernov, Tseretelli, Skobelev, Nekrasov, Efremov, and Kerenskii said and preached that which, in principle, had to lead to the rule of the Bolsheviks, who decided finally to put their words into practice.

It is important for the future of Russia that the socialist and radical intelligentsia not be given the chance to transfer the ideological responsibility for the collapse of their whole system of ideas to the Bolsheviks alone. Obviously, this is not a case of criminal responsibility. But, in the realm of ideas, it must be firmly established that a close, unbroken link exists between Bolshevism and all the left-radical and socialist streams of Russian thought. One draws the other after it. Russian socialists, finding themselves in power, either had to remain simple chatterers, who did nothing for the realization of their ideas, or they had to do everything the Bolsheviks did, from A to Z. When the Bolsheviks insist on this, they are irrefutable. This turned out to be true in 1917-18. It will also be true in the future.

II

Not one meeting takes place nowadays without orators, primarily socialists, calling for culture. According to them, culture, more precisely—European culture, must save us from all contemporary horrors and lead us into a bright future. In essence, it would be odd to argue against this. The misfortune is only that those who speak, either do not explain what they mean by culture, or they clearly do not understand the meaning of this concept. Appealing to culture, they continue to preach views and teachings which fundamentally negate the bases of European culture. From force of habit, these gentlemen take from all of European culture but one small part, which in the overall structure of the organism plays only the subordinate role of a weapon of criticism. But they present it as the whole structure of European culture. They have inoculated, and continue to inoculate, Russian society with false conceptions of European culture. In this regard, even many Russian academicians differ little from the run of the mill socialist preachers or agitators. The ideas of socialism and anarchism, the political and agitational activity of European socialists and agitators—is all that has been presented to us as European culture. This has long been the custom. The most outstanding foreign correspondents of liberal Russian newspapers were also the greatest falsifiers of European culture. Meanwhile, up to this time, socialism has played, not a constructive, but a mainly negative, critical role in European life. In organizing the workers, the landless, and the urban masses, socialism, but not socialism alone, has only pushed toward social reform, toward improvement of the conditions of industrial labor, toward a more just division of the tax burden. But even the labor union and cooperative movements, whose organizing role is many times stronger than socialism, cannot be linked either with socialism or with the activities of socialists who take great part in trade-unionism and cooperation. Anyone who looks somewhat deeper into the labor union movement will easily be convinced that, in the final analysis, it rests on nationalism. It protects the interests of the workers of a given country, and the limits of its achievements depend on the strength of that country. With a deeper analysis, it is not difficult to see that the fundamental principle of cooperation is private property. Both of these ideas, state nationalism and private property, are fundamentally opposed to the idea of pure socialism. Therefore the Bolsheviks are completely correct when they denounce the great majority of West European socialists for “bourgeoisness,” for apostasy from the teachings of the Marxist Koran, and from the testaments of the first teachers. The creative part of European socialism, by virtue of its being “bourgeois,” is based on ideas contradictory to socialism. The great, universal significance of the Russian Bolsheviks’ activities lies in the fact that they thoroughly demonstrated this truth to the whole world. This is what the consistent implementation of socialist ideas means, they said, this is what socialism realized in life looks like. And the whole world, socialists sooner than others, was horrified by the revelation of these nightmarish pic-

tures of wildness, this return to the times of the Black Death, the Thirty Years' War, and the great Moscow Troubles. The world was horrified by this unheard of despotism, this monstrous coercion, and this full rending of all social links. Such is what socialism, actually realized and tried out in life, turned out to be. Involuntarily one recalls the famous words of Chaadaev: "We belong to that number of nations which seem not to enter into the ranks of humanity, but which exist only to give the world some kind of important lesson. The exhortation which we have been called to give, of course, will not be lost; but who can say when we will find ourselves in the midst of humanity, and how many misfortunes we are fated to experience before we fulfill our destiny." Truly, in these words, written ninety years ago, one hears something prophetic.

The trade union movement and cooperation are products of "bourgeois" development; they are based on "bourgeois" principles of state nationalism and private property. This was shown even by the Bolsheviks, who logically and unavoidably came into conflict with both worker organizations and cooperatives, whose independence they had to break on their path to a socialist overturn. The same sad fate overcame the creative political attainments of the European socialists. These grew most splendidly in Germany. German Social-Democracy succeeded in creating a great, million-membered, beautifully organized party, with many party institutions, printed editions, and economic and educational activities. After a half-century, German Social-Democracy worked out in detail a system of parliamentary party tactics for political struggle in democratic representative assemblies. The Bolsheviks, departing from pure Marxist teaching, proved convincingly that even in this area the attainments of Social-Democracy were thoroughly bourgeois. Can one seriously dispute this? Was not the organization of the Social-Democrat party built on a model of ordinary bureaucratic institutions? Were not the rewards of activists structured along the "bourgeois" principle of personal benefit? In the setting-up of institutions did the "economic principle" not triumph? But how could it have been otherwise, so long as the Social-Democrats wanted to create something strong, firm and serious out of their institutions. With regard to the "political tactics" of German Social-Democracy, it would not occur to anyone to question the correctness of Bolshevik allegations. The party of Scheidemann, which is the best support of Bethmann-Hollweg and Wilhelm II, is the logical result of the political development of parliamentary socialism from Marx and Engels through Bebel, Kautsky, and Bernstein to David and Scheidemann. The Ukrainian Hetman Skoropadskii had every right to say that he was no less a democrat than the present-day leaders of German Social-Democracy, and the *Transactions of the Central Executive Committee of the Soviets* supported the justice of his words.

Everything positive, in whose creation the socialists directly or indirectly took part, bears the indelible stamp of "bourgeoisness": social legislation, the labor union movement, cooperation, the building of a political party, the tactics of political struggle. But can it be that this comprises the whole content

of European culture? Furthermore, doesn't it really comprise only one very small part of culture? But in the creation of the other part, which is qualitatively and quantitatively much more significant, socialism has definitely not participated.

III

The concept of culture is formed from the culture of the individual, from spiritual culture and material culture, from the culture of things, which constitutes all of our existence. Both the spiritual and the material culture of the West Europeans is founded on principles which contradict pure socialism, and which, therefore, were properly rejected by the Russian Bolsheviks. But when the latter attempted to construct their own culture, founded on the consistently applied principles of socialism, they arrive at the "cannibalism" spoken of by Dostoevskii, the greatest Russian writer. Not without reason is he so loathed by M. Gor'kii, that colorful offspring of the mixture of popular vagabondage, intellectual Bolshevism, and spiritual vagabondage. Nechaevism was the first powerful manifestation of Russian Bolshevism. Dostoevskii's genius was revealed by the fact that even then, with only a few lines, he sketched the whole picture which today is vindicated so dreadfully in all its detail (*The Devils*). Even Shigalev,¹ not without amazement, noted in his teaching that "departing from unlimited freedom" he "arrives at unlimited despotism." Shigalev, like Lenin, arrived at the necessity of committing "nine-tenths of the people into slavery." "Only the bare minimum is necessary"—Petr Verkhovenskii develops Shigalev's ideas—"this is the motto of the world from now on. But convulsions are also necessary; we the rulers will concern ourselves with this. Slaves must have rulers. Complete obedience, complete lack of individuality; but once in thirty years Shigalev allows a convulsion and suddenly all begin to eat each other." "The earth will moan 'a new just law comes,' and the sea will agitate and the marquee will collapse, and then we will think about erecting a stone building. For the first time! *We* will build, only *we*!" Anticipating the words of "Maria Spiridonova," Shigalev then likewise affirmed that this would be "paradise, earthly paradise, and there can be no other on earth." We had the good fortune to live in this "paradise." This is the kind of "paradise" Shigalev promised: "Every member of society looks after all the others and is obligated to report. . . . All are slaves and in slavery are equal. In extreme cases slander and murder, but the main thing is equality. First the level of education, science, and talent falls. Higher talents. . . , they banish or imprison them. . . . In a herd there must be equality. . . . A little bit of family or love, and there is already the desire for property." "I understand nothing without discipline," proclaimed Verkhovenskii.

1. Shigalev is the theorist among the "possessed" conspirators in Dostoevskii's *The Devils*. His plans begin with the goal of freedom and end in slavery. *Ed.*

For decades, Dostoevskii's pictures were considered caricatures of Russian socialism. But by 1905-06 it was evident, to "those who had eyes," that, prophetically, Dostoevskii had seen through to the depth of events. In 1917-18, there can no longer even be any argument about this. How was it possible for Dostoevskii to see so keenly into the gloom of the future? The fact is, that he grasped accurately and exactly the deepest essence of Russian socialism, the striving "at full steam," as Verkhovenskiĭ said and Lenin and Trotskii repeated, to create an earthly paradise immediately without God, and without a religious idea. It was clear to Dostoevskii that all moral culture attained by contemporary man is based on religion, on a sense of God. One might argue about what Dostoevskii believed, and about what kind of faith he had, but it is impossible to forget the astonishing words he placed on the lips of Ivan Karamazov: "It would not be so strange, nor would it be amazing, that God in fact exists, but what is amazing is that such an idea—the idea of the necessity of God—could get into the head of such a savage and evil animal as man. It is so holy, so touching, so wise, and it does man such an honor."

The centuries of Christianity ennobled human nature. Orthodoxy nurtured the soul of Russian man. And today, when the Bolsheviks have made their attempt, and have shown us man without God, without religion, without Orthodoxy, they have shown him in the condition Dostoevskii described: "If there is no God, then all is allowed," then the whole world is horrified by this blood-thirsty, sadistically evil ape. The mass shootings of children, the massacres, the torture, the greatest mockery of the people—and all of this either out of insolence, hooliganism, malice, or still worse, out of selfishness, or for the sake of extorting money. "So savage and evil an animal as man. . . ." With our own eyes we saw what this man is transformed into when he has liberated himself from God and has called himself a "socialist." Never before in society have social links been so weak, so strained, as during the official reign of socialism. Man is as a wolf to man—that is the basic motto of these terrible days. Cooperation and community occurred only during a crime. After that, with the division of the spoils, each thought only of himself, pushing from the path the weaker or less experienced. A pack of wolves, which tear the spoils from each other. A herd of bulls, seized by panic, which trample everything that lies in the path. . . .

The silly fairy tales about "proletarians" and the "bourzhooies" that masked these crimes and evil deeds, were composed for children. Nearly always, the murderers and plunderers were the real "bourgeois" although they called themselves Bolsheviks, socialists, and communists. The great majority of their victims—one need only recall the deputies Shingarev, Kokoshkin, Tuliakov²—had nothing in common with "millionaires" and "exploiters" of others' labor.

2. Shingarev, Kokoshkin, and Tuliakov were early victims of "revolutionary justice." Shingarev and Kokoshkin, former Provisional Government ministers, were murdered in a Petrograd hospital. *Ed.*

They were only talented toilers, earning their living from the work of their own hands and their own minds. But, after all, in Shigalev's paradise "they tear out Cicero's tongue, burn out Copernicus' eyes, and pelt Shakespeare with stones. . . . the higher talents will be exiled or imprisoned. . . ."

Socialism is Christianity without God. But, in the reign of this unique "Christianity," people not only do not work together in a friendly way, but like wolves they throw themselves on each other, look each other in the mouth, reckon the morsel in the other's mouth and tear it away along with life. And all the declamations about socialism, about proletarian solidarity, about proletarian discipline, about working together for the common good—all these sentimental phrases, were only the accompaniment to scenes of primitive cannibalism. Liberated from religion, man has not gone forward with great strides to the kingdom of reason, freedom, equality, and brotherhood, as the false socialist prophets taught, but backward to the time of the caveman's way of life and to bestial morals.

What then is a cultural force: is it religion declared reactionary, Orthodoxy mocked by the socialists, or atheistic socialism?

Religion is the cornerstone of the culture of human society. When people desired to build a human society without it, they failed and only showed several scenes of a bestial *mélée*.

IV

Science and art come after religion in the realm of spiritual life. Science and art, in the form in which they exist in the West, have long been declared "bourgeois" by the socialists. Our socialist writers, beginning with N. G. Chernyshevskii and N. K. Mikhailovskii, also spent no little ink and wit on the struggle with "narrow-mindedness," "philistinism," "parochial bourgeoisness," and "academic" sciences, both native and foreign. In their accusations against "native" science, at least against that part of it concerned with the social sciences, our socialist publicists were unjust, even from their own point of view. Very often our professors of social science were only the modest pupils of Chernyshevskii, Mikhailovskii, and Plekhanov; and the scholarly works of many of these academic scholars differed little from the polemical articles of the socialist publicists. In this regard, the history of political economy in our universities is instructive. Here those professors who stood at the contemporary peak of their discipline were totally unpopular in society, while the popular professors occupied themselves with pitiable rehashes of foreign Marxist or native *narodnik* doctrine. Only at the beginning of the twentieth century did our academic political economy pay attention to, and side with, the great theoretical work of West European and American thought on political economy. For years, when the economic theory of Karl Marx had already been destroyed by European theoreticians, we naïvely considered it the last word in economics. Our scholars spent no little effort patching the Marxist garment which had come

apart at the seams, and applying it to obstinate reality. In this case, too, the Bolsheviks played the great role of experimenters. When they began to implement their "socialization of production" on the exact foundation of Marxist doctrine, and when they thought to conduct a "general inventory" with real "labor" values, the most dedicated Marxists were forced to speak the language not only of "bourgeois," but even of "national" economics. Through an experiment immensely burdensome for the country, it was shown that Marx's "labor theory of value" is only a fiction, the imaginary value of an abstract, impracticable construct, while prices, demand and supply, the utilization and quantity of wealth—were vital, immediate, everyday realities. In the only area where socialism pretended to be scientific, the unscientific character of socialism was revealed, mercilessly, in the course of experience.

As for the remaining areas of science, scarcely anyone will dispute the full bankruptcy of the socialists, and their laughable pretenses of opposing to "bourgeois" science, some kind of "proletarian" science of their own. All attempts to create a "proletarian" science were reduced to anecdotes about night-watchmen who demanded the right to vote on the resolution of scientific questions at the Academy of Science and the universities. In the end, they compromised by raising their salaries for less work in sweeping the floor. Jabbering to stupefaction about "bourgeois" science, when they came up with the idea of correcting their finances, the Messrs Bolsheviks had to turn to the very same bourgeois scholars they had treated so disdainfully, for the establishment of their industrial enterprises. But here it became clear to our socialists that, even in the narrow area of the industrial utilization of science, certain social conditions are necessary, so that science can become "the milch cow" of humanity, and that socialism contradicts such conditions in a fundamental way. The plan for university reform worked out by the Bolsheviks, with the re-election of professors every three years, the obligatory reading of popular lectures, and the certificates of socialist reliability—will always remain monuments of human dimwittedness and ignorance. In the area of "science," as in the area of censorship, the Russian socialist-Bolsheviks provided an endless number of anecdotes that overshadowed everything that had been used to blacken the eyes of the autocratic bureaucracy of Paul and Nicholas I.

Socialism's lack of culture in the area of science comes down to the same basic sin as its lack of culture in the area of moral life: the dream that it is possible to tear the tradition of peaceful human life to shreds and leap from the realm of "bourgeois filth" into the "socialist paradise." Insofar as socialism rejected this arrogant and nonsensical idea, it ceased to be "socialism," and turned into some other transforming idea, whether right or wrong, that was familiar to the "bourgeois world." The Bolsheviks were unconditionally right when they accused of apostasy from socialism those of their comrades who had not yet lost common sense, who saw the impossibility of severing oneself from the "bourgeois" umbilical cord, and who diplomatically showed that the hour for the "leap from the realm of necessity into the realm of

freedom" "had not yet arrived." But the Bolsheviks themselves, having made such a "leap," fatally found themselves, not ahead, but somewhere behind, at one of those stages passed through long ago by "bourgeois humanity" and two or three centuries ago by the Russian state.

Science draws its cultural strength from the continuity of scientific investigations. This is a truth which can never be acquired by various half-educated autodidacts, and which was revealed very long ago, before the discovery of America. European science is strong precisely because its cultural tradition passes from century to century. The fundamental crime of the old Russian regime against science consisted in the fact that treating scholars like *chinovniks* of autocratic power, it did not give the scientific tradition an opportunity to take root among us. In its turn, the "Soviet power" also wants to make professors and academics "its" *chinovniks* and lackeys. More than once, it has been noticed how the Bolsheviks in the Ministry of National Education literally copied the methods of Kasso . . . without, however, possessing his knowledge drawn from foreign universities. Kasso's bluntness stemmed from his scorn of the Russian people, while the Bolsheviks replaced that with scorn of all "bourzhooies."

In the field of art, the Bolsheviks also promised to show the Russian people a "new heaven and a new earth." For this, A. V. Lunacharskii was given a special commission and many millions of rubles. Money exercised its influence, and scores of pilgrims were drawn toward the burning light. Was a special "proletarian" art created? I will leave this for specialists to judge. Meanwhile, in this field one hears nothing but anecdotes, and nasty anecdotes at that. Our socialist proletariat even lacked sufficient inspiration for the creation of its revolutionary anthem. As D. S. Merezhkovskii has noted, this artistic impotence is "an evil sign." One must say, in this regard, that Russian proletarian socialism shares the fate of proletarian socialism in all European countries. None of the major artists who excelled in recent years have been either proletarian or socialist. And the latest artistic wave in France, for example, moves under the powerful influence of a Catholic revival.

The great cultural values—science and art—are values of the "bourgeois world." The experience of the Russian Bolsheviks showed that these values cannot exist in the "socialist kingdom." There, they cannot breathe.

V

Law and politics.

In his essay in *Signposts*, "In Defense of Law," B. A. Kistiakovskii reproached the Russian intelligentsia for its disrespect for law, and for its "amazing absence of legal feeling." As a vivid example, he cited the speech by G. V. Plekhanov, at the second congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Labor Party. G. V. Plekhanov is undoubtedly the most prominent of the Russian Social-Democrats. He devoted almost all of his life to "the destruction of the *narod-*

nik illusions of the Russian intelligentsia," including its negative attitude toward a "constitution." And, nonetheless, at the second party congress, G. V. Plekhanov developed the following ideas: "The success of the revolution is the highest law. And if the success of the revolution requires a temporary suspension of one or another democratic principle, it would be criminal to stop short of that suspension. As my own personal opinion, I will say that it is even necessary to look upon the principle of universal suffrage from the standpoint of the basic principle of democracy I have stated. Hypothetically, we can think of a situation when we Social Democrats would speak out against universal suffrage. The revolutionary proletariat could limit the political rights of the higher classes, just as the higher classes once limited its political rights. If, in a burst of revolutionary enthusiasm, the people elected a very good parliament, its own kind of *chambre introuvable*,³ then it would follow that we strive to make it a long parliament; but if the election proved to be unsuccessful, then it would be necessary for us to try to dissolve it, not after two years, but if possible, after two weeks." These revelations of G. V. Plekhanov surprised even some members of the congress, who were infected, obviously, with "bourgeois, parliamentary cretinism," and from their midst the caustic question was heard: "And will comrade Plekhanov not also deprive the bourgeoisie of free speech and personal inviolability?"

In 1917, the Bolsheviks only realized what G. V. Plekhanov had taught them back in 1903. If they dispersed the Constituent Assembly, not after two weeks, but after a day, then the difference here was not a matter of principle. The sailor Zhelezniakov could do this in one day—that was all there was to it. The Bolsheviks simply deprived the "bourgeoisie" of any electoral or political rights. And not only the bourgeoisie, for that matter. Just like people who do mental work—the intelligentsia, engineers, writers, doctors, bureaucrats, and others—artisans were also numbered in the ranks of second or third rate citizens. If in some place there turned out to be twenty workers, and one hundred and eighty artisans and intellectuals, then according to one of the provisions of the Soviet constitution, the "first curia" might send sixteen of the twenty as deputies, but the second curia could send only four. As regards "freedom," that caustic question posed to G. V. Plekhanov in his day, did not even touch the ears of the Bolsheviks. All told, can one even question that the Bolsheviks, in all their political creativity, were not only the students of Kryzhanovskii, but also of G. V. Plekhanov? And if G. V. Plekhanov was sincerely horrified when he saw the fulfillment of his ideas in reality, if he damned the work of his students, recoiled from them, and died forgotten, abandoned, and disgraced by Russian worker Social-Democrats, then this tragic fate of a prominent Russian writer gives witness to the nobility of his character and the purity of his heart. But, at the same time, it is the most severe judgment over all his political ideology. It is not without reason that the Bolsheviks, while retaining the ideas

3. "*Chambre introuvable*," a matchless chamber, or just the chamber we want wanted. Ed.

of G. V. Plekhanov, proclaimed, with their typical lack of ceremony, that at the end of his life he was drawn back to the milieu from which he had come, referring to the noble origins of their former leader and teacher.

What is characteristic, however, is not this tragic fate of the "founder of Russian Marxism." What is characteristic is that throughout his life he was truly incapable of understanding the basic falsehood of his views, which led his party into such senseless and shameful actions. G. V. Plekhanov did not understand that when conservatives and reactionaries limit universal suffrage, they act in agreement with their ideas, founded on the thought that not all people are mature enough to use this political right. But when the Social-Democrats come out for a limitation of suffrage, they act against their views, and thereby admit the bankruptcy of their basic principle. The principle of universal equal suffrage is founded on the recognition of the political equality of people. For whatever reasons, class or national, one need only shake this principle of equality, and the whole political structure will collapse. And in reality, the Social-Democrats, by their own hands, have destroyed in Russia for many decades to come the political structure based on universal, direct, and equal suffrage that was flaunted in their program. At one time, they took such pride in this thought and so exulted in the fact that they had forced it upon the Kadets—and then, they themselves killed it, and threw it out to the dogs like stinking carrion!

Rejecting law in politics, the Bolsheviks abolished it in everyday life, destroying courts, replacing positive law with "revolutionary consciousness," and so on. Instead of the expected kingdom of justice in life, the usual "bourgeois" robbery and the rule of crude physical force prevailed. Armed people took property away from the unarmed and weak, doing this either alone, or as a mob. The whole "social revolution" deprived of any kind of idealism led to this. Robbery led to its usual results. In countries where legal order is not guaranteed, there is no justice, and social safety is absent, enterprise dies, an excessive rise in the price of all products occurs. Force and coercion are resisted by fraud, hypocrisy, and a desire to crawl into one's shell to hide one's condition from everyone. All of these are the usual features of life in slave states, in Asiatic and African despotisms. The socialists, promising an earthly paradise in words, produced the most ordinary despotism in deeds. It is worth noting, however, that in their campaign against the courts, the Bolsheviks played on a dissatisfaction with certain aspects of Russian justice that really existed in the masses. It was the same when the Bolsheviks also smashed the organs of local self-government. Just as the masses were always troubled by the abstractness of the work of the rural and urban organs of self-government, by their feeble reflection in the everyday material life of the people, so too, in the area of the courts, the people were indignant about the excessive formalism, the red-tape, the complexity of the process, the mildness of punishment for crimes, especially those burdensome for the peasantry, like horse stealing. But while the dissatisfaction of the people undoubtedly derived from

a recognition of the necessity for firm law, our socialists used this dissatisfaction for the triumph of their own ideas, which derive from the denial of "bourgeois justice."

In their hatred of the "bourgeois world," having liberated the people from "law," the socialists only return it to an initial stage of the development . . . "of bourgeois law." The *lex talionis*⁴ came to rule in our lives; the cruelest forms of capital punishment and infamous punishments, reprisals without trial and investigation were put into practice. Then, recalling bits of the "tsarist law" about the judicial system, legal proceedings, criminal law, and process, the Bolshevik jurists began in an incoherent way to re-establish various institutions of the old law. Thus, even now, in obscure hamlets, original inventors invent their flying machines, imitating the flight of birds.

In the area of law, socialism turned out to be a return to lawlessness. Socialism in the area of political life gave a picture of the most repulsive despotism, with exclusive laws, civil inequality, daily coercion, the absence of any freedoms, with torture in prisons and the police stations, and with mass and individual shootings of the unarmed. The only difference between the blackest reaction and red socialism comes down to the fact that, with the first, actions correspond with words, with reactionary teachings, while, with socialism, bestial cruelty and injustice are accompanied by sentimental effusions in praise of liberty, equality, and fraternity.

VI

Religion, as is well-known, consists of childish stories thought up by the "priests" in order to justify the "exploiters." Ethics and law are also products of the intellectual cunning of the bourgeoisie, for the enslavement of the exploited classes. Only economics are real. The foundation of social life is the production of material well-being. Everything else is only superstructure. Only that person who masters this foundation, and transforms it, will also be the true revolutionary who creates new forms of life.

For decades, the Russian intelligentsia was brought up on this theory, so neat on paper, which was transformed into a symbol of the new socialist faith. But then the Bolsheviks finally arrived, and they decided to apply in reality the doctrine that had served the needs of opposition phraseology. The holy of holies of the Russian intelligentsia was put to the test of experience: their doctrines about democratic socialism, as the best economic structure, the most progressive in the development of economic forces, and the most just and advantageous for the people.

The failure of Russian socialism in this area is the most serious and, at the same time, beyond question. When, during the times of tsarism, the issuance of paper money reached double the sum of our metal reserves, when trains ar-

4. "The law of retaliation." *Ed.*

rived two hours late, when bread rose in price five kopeks a pound, and when Rittikh's apportionment gave only one half the expected return, our intelligentsia advanced their economic program. A bread monopoly, fixed prices, democratic control through representatives of labor union organizations, the replacement of bureaucracy with free "communal organizations," the democratic organization of production, and so on. That was the essence of this program. Did many people realize even then that this program, which was powerful as a revolutionary weapon, would prove to be powerless and harmful if the attempt was made to carry it out in the context of Russian life. The present leader of Bolshevik economic policy, Larin-Lur'e, then a co-worker on *Russian News* and *Messenger of Europe* which did not recognize any tinge of defeatism in the writings of this man, at that time delighted Russian society with stories about how widely organized the regulation of supply and production was in Germany. Mr. Larin-Lur'e concealed from the Russian reader that this regulation was possible only because of the existence in Germany of strong authority, a powerful and honorable "bureaucratic mechanism," an organized bourgeoisie, and an organized, rich, working class which was trained for decades by the German police to an observance of legal norms, and which, from the beginning of the war, as represented by its party, took an honorable and definitely patriotic stand. All these conditions were necessary prerequisites for the success of the experiment of German military state socialism. Mr. Larin-Lur'e falsified the German reality for Russian readers, by keeping silent about the most important factors, and attributing the whole system to the successful class struggle of German proletariat. Vindictive history laid it upon Mr. Larin-Lur'e himself to bear witness to the truth of the proverb that if you go around the whole world with a lie, you cannot return. The "class struggle" of the Russian "proletariat" was a fairy tale victory. What is the significance of the pitiable victory of the German workers, who gained an extra two hundred grams of bread, compared to the victory of the Russian "working class," which seized in its hands all the power of the state, all state and private property! We had to show the whole world the image of real socialist regulation of supply, production, and exchange. In speeches and articles, Larin-Lur'e and Lenin, with all the seriousness they possessed, often developed both the great advantages and the grand principles of the new social order. They did not limit themselves to speeches, but went over to the realization of their ideas. And they showed the entire world that these ideas kill all industry, halt and destroy all production, destroy all the wealth of the country, generate enormous and mass speculation, ensure certain hunger even with adequate supplies on hand, and support the value of countless paper money only with the devaluation of human blood.

The alpha and omega of the new economic order, the Bolsheviks announce as "workers' control" or as "the proletariat itself takes matters in its own hands."

"Workers' control" very soon revealed its true character. These words al-

ways sounded, as the beginning of the destruction of an enterprise. Immediately, all discipline was abolished. Authority over the factory or works would go over to quickly formed committees that rapidly succeeded one another, and which, in fact, were responsible to no one for anything. Skilled, honorable workers would be chased away, or even killed. The productivity of labor fell, in inverse proportion to the rise in workers' pay. The relationship between the two would often be expressed in mind-boggling figures: pay was raised and productivity fell up to 500-800 percent. Enterprises continued to exist only because either the state, which controlled the printing presses, took over support of the workers, or because the workers sold and consumed the fixed capital of the enterprise. According to Marxist theory, the socialist revolution will be caused by the fact that productive forces outgrow the forms of production, and that with new socialist forms they will have the possibility of further progressive development, etc., etc. Experience revealed the falsity of this cock and bull story. With the "socialist" order, the extraordinary lowering of the productivity of labor began. With "socialism," our productive forces regressed to the time of the serf factories of Peter the Great.

Democratic self-rule ultimately destroyed our railways. With an income of one and a half billion rubles, the railroads had to pay about eight billion for the support of workers and employees alone.

Desiring to seize the financial power of "bourgeois society" into their own hands, the Bolsheviks used Red Guard raids to "nationalize" all banks. They really only acquired those few pathetic millions which they succeeded in seizing in safes. But, in return for that, they destroyed credit and deprived industrial enterprises of all credits. In order not to leave hundreds of thousands of workers without pay, the Bolsheviks had to open for them the till of the state bank which was steadily kept full by the unrestrained printing of paper money. The flow of savings was halted, not only to commercial banks, but also to savings banks. It turned out that the people trust the people's power least of all. Moreover, even earlier, in the pre-Bolshevik period of the revolution, a surprising fact was revealed. Commercial banks, that is "bourgeois" institutions, showed more trust in revolutionary "freedom loans" than in tsarist loans; while the democratic public of savings banks showed the reverse. Because the inflow of deposits almost ceased, both in state (tax revenues) and in bank tills (deposits, sale of bonds), the entire state and private economy was reduced to the simple spending of the capital that had been accumulated earlier.

The destruction of credit, the final disorganization of transport, the "nationalization" of enterprises, the "workers' control," ruined Russian industry. While deep-thinking Marxist theorists were doing their "inventory," with its tally of "productive forces," with its calculations of labor energy, and while they preached the Taylor system in a socialist version, simple but real economic laws were operating in life. Life was setting prices, according to the laws of "bourgeois" economics. To the struggle of socialists with the principles of

property, life answered with a natural, irresistible, although perverse, affirmation of this principle, in the persons of a multi-million army of "peddlers." If socialist experiments did not bring millions of Russians to catastrophic death from hunger, then we must thank the peddlers for this. At the risk of their lives, they fed their families and maintained the exchange of products, at a time when the socialist power did everything to curtail it. Many millions of Russians with strong muscles and powerful legs went on the road and traded. After the abolition of normal trade, which was replaced by hundreds of thousands of well-paid new bureaucrats, who understood nothing of trade matters and were generally ignorant and dishonorable, only the peddlers' trade made it possible for the population of Russian cities and plants to bear the terrible spring and summer months of 1918.

Marxists always took pride in the "scientific character" of their views. For them, the economic life of the peoples was an open book, which they read, page by page, without hesitation, with the help of Marx's dictionary. But here, in the first serious confrontation with real, and not imagined, economic life, all phrases about "economic laws" were cast aside. Such great, natural, and irrepressible mass phenomena as the refusal of peasants to give grain at fixed prices for valueless money, the grand development of peddling, or the catastrophic fall in the productivity of labor, they began to explain as "counter-revolutionary agitation" of the right S.R.'s and Mensheviks, or "sabotage" of the Kadet bourgeoisie and intelligentsia. The stupid police mentality of the Bolsheviks overshadowed a hundredfold the stupid police mentality of the old regime, which also did not understand economic questions very clearly. For Marxism and "scientific socialism," this naïve explanation of economic catastrophe as "counter-revolutionary agitation" sounds like a caustic epitaph on the tomb of a bankrupt person. As people of action, the Bolsheviks in place of all "economic laws" grabbed straightway for the club, the rifle, the machine gun, and they began to shoot "speculators" and take away their property, throw "saboteurs" in prison, and create armed detachments for grain raids on the villages. It is beyond dispute that the force of governmental authority shows its influence on economic life. From this point of view, perhaps, one can welcome that instinctive, yet contrary to the theory, reaction against the metaphysical fatalism of "economic laws," which was expressed in the convulsive actions of the Bolsheviks. State power, especially if it is strong and well-organized, proves to be a serious influence on the economy of the country. But this influence is not without limits. The gentlemen who boast of their "economic materialism" in fact completely forgot about that. And secondly, in the cruelty and unexpectedness of their impulsive actions, the power they had at their disposal was terrible, but it was neither strong nor organized.

It could be neither strong nor organized, because in all of its constructions it was based on a false conception of human nature.

VII

The main cause of the present collapse of Russian socialism is its false and deceitful teaching about man. Socialism attained the height of its development in Marxism, in scientific socialism, and in economic materialism.

It must be obvious to anyone who stops to think about the Russian revolution that socialism erred not only in its relationship to the higher side of human nature, to the spiritual strivings of man, but that it did not even understand the stimula of his material activity, on which it tried to construct all social life and all social links.

Socialism struggles with religion, nationalism, and patriotism as reactionary phenomena which serve as obstacles to humanity on the path to universal happiness. But people liberated by socialism from religion, seem not even to be human; they seem like bloodthirsty, predatory animals, dangerous for the common life of all humanity. Deprived of links with God as they formerly understood Him, these people fell into a moral and intellectual stupor. They felt like abandoned swimmers in a boundless sea, deprived of all supports, stricken by everlasting fears of ultimate destruction. Their sadistic cruelty often was only a means to lighten their fear. With the collapse of faith in God in the mass of people, all kinds of social links with neighbors were also broken off; the stable criteria for relations with them disappeared, that is, the basis of morality disappeared. Under the socialist flag, rather than individualism, which is lawful and within certain limits necessary for us, anti-social solipsism, which destroys social links, arrived in Russian life. The slogans were speaking about universal brotherhood and equality, but in reality every "socialist" acted according to the rule: each for himself, grab what you can, where you can.

Never before was Russia befouled with so much villainy, lies, treachery, baseness, and heartlessness as in the year of revolution. And, if earlier, in the years of reactionary quietism, a man who was showing off his external religiosity aroused doubts about himself, then, in the year of revolution, a man's daring and open profession of his religious faith at once elevated him over the crowd of betraying and brutalized people. The socialist revolution, intending to destroy, rather strengthened religion in Russia; it cleansed and elevated the clerics, reminding them about sacrifice and service.

Socialism carried on a struggle with Russian nationalism and patriotism. The Brest-Litovsk peace, the dismemberment of Russia, the complete destruction of Russian military power and the Russian state, showed that, in fighting with Russian patriotism and nationalism, Russian socialism, intentionally or not, served the patriotism and nationalism of Germany. Headed by such a questionable character as Robert Grimm, the Zimmerwald organization, which was the source of the new internationalism that cut down the state power of Russia, played the strange role of a distinctive arm of German policy. In all countries, where the Social-Democrats represented the really organized and conscious working masses, in fact, they transformed themselves into a state,

patriotic, and national party, even while preserving their revolutionary-internationalist phraseology. This transformation was shown with greatest clarity and strength in Germany, where the Social-Democrats supported Wilhelm II, his chancellor and ministers, voted war credits, and even placed their leaders in the direct service of overt and covert German imperial diplomacy, not for fear, but for conscience. Before the Russian revolution, one could still observe in the German working class a certain dissatisfaction with such politics. But after the Russian example clearly showed to the whole world what Zimmerwaldian socialism leads to, by-elections in the German Reichstag twice showed that even the German "Independents," who were more moderate than Russian Mensheviks, were swept aside by a German working class that remained true to its Scheidemanns. From the point of view of the socialist Koran and its precept, "workers have no country," the Bolsheviks were the only followers of the teaching who were true to the socialist faith, until they stumbled over their "defense of the socialist fatherland." Of course, their "fall" was more of a theoretical than practical character. They started speaking about defense of the "socialist fatherland," at a time when only tatters remained of that fatherland. Uttering phrases about the Red Army, in fact they created only police units for use against "internal enemies" and for the seizing of grain from the peasants. Without the idea of a national fatherland above classes, it is impossible to create a real army. After Brest, and even before it, German troops occupied Russian land with almost a parade march, and German diplomacy spoke with the Soviet authority in a tone European powers use when they talk with Persians. But this theoretical "fall" of the Bolsheviks, which abstractly recognizes the absurd and internally contradictory socialist, internationalist fatherland, only closed the circle. The struggle of socialism with the "bourgeois" understandings of "patriotism" and "nationalism" was crowned by the full defeat of socialism. Cases of high treason, of dealings with foreign states, and so on, initiated by the Bolsheviks, were official testimony acknowledging their defeat.

Socialists, in the persons of their most consistent and active representatives, proved, in experiments burdensome for Russia, that they did not have any understanding of the higher side of the human soul, of the motives which drive people to deny their personal being and their individuality, and sacrifice it to some higher goal. All attempts to replace religious faith and patriotism with calls to the instincts of class hatred, to the craving for material well-being, or in extreme cases, to personal lust for power, have led, not to heroism and self-sacrifice, but to cases of cowardly malice and disgraceful robbery. Here, death appeared only as a chance concomitant, as often is the case with ordinary criminal acts and raids. Facing the armed external enemy, our socialists protected neither their country nor their convictions. They retreated everywhere and always, despite overwhelming numerical superiority. But they compensated for these defeats by easy and bloody victories over weak, and for the most part unarmed, "internal enemies." There is scarcely a city in Russia which could not give several examples from the chronicle of its life.

Even the motives which drive man in the economic area, in the sphere of the production and the distribution of goods, were also misunderstood by the socialists, and that led to the complete collapse of their economic policy. The basic falsehood consists in the fact that the socialists, believing in the imaginary reality of the Marxist labor theory of value, where value is congealed "social labor," and working out on this basis their fantastic "objective laws," in no way understood that value, like other economic concepts, is a psychological category, and that authentic laws of value and price must be sought in the psyche of man.

On the basis of their fantastic "objective" laws, they divided humanity into different groups: petty, middle, and big bourgeoisie, the proletariat, and so on. They imagined that this was not merely an abstract, methodological construct of their minds, but an actual reality, and that the members of these groups are subject to different "social economic laws." They imagined that, in fact, the bourgeoisie thinks in a bourgeois way, and the proletariat in its own socialist way. Their first confrontation with reality destroyed all of these castles in the air. All over, workers turned out to be just as "bourgeois" as anyone else. Incentives to work and to exchange products seemed to be literally the same with them as with other people. And when, having destroyed all incentives to work, the socialists, contrary to the usual laws of bourgeois political economy, thought to replace them with a socialistic organization of labor, it did not take them long to realize that the proletariat was deeply infected with the "petty bourgeois poison," and did not wish to work for equal rations, without individual advantage. The entire economic policy of the Russian socialists came down to the fact that ever newer and ever wider circles of people appeared as bourgeois, petty bourgeois, and counter-revolutionaries. They began with the merchants, went on to members of cooperatives, intellectuals, peasants, worker-aristocrats, and even to rank and file workers, who also had to be put on piecework pay, with a higher rate according to the Taylor system of labor. Gradually, all "bourgeois" institutions were re-established and justified in theory; "workers' control" was significantly curtailed, as were the right of choosing technical personnel and the right of strike and coalition. But "bourgeois" curtailments, without the "bourgeois" positive stimuli, gave no tangible results, except innumerable conflicts. Having rejected "bourgeois" concepts, the socialists saw themselves obliged more and more often to resort to brute force, to physical compulsion, not only against "petty," "middle," and "big bourgeois" strata of the population, but also against the proletarian stratum itself. The whole population of Russia, except a small bunch of Red Army soldiers and Bolshevik leaders, turned out to be "petty bourgeois." Indeed, even the "commitment to socialism" of the latter was subject to great doubts. Soon it became clear that the socialist form of economy could be established here in only one way: with the conversion of a great majority of the population into the same kind of slavery that allowed the Egyptians to build the pyramids, for example. In order to take from the peasants all the grain ex-

cept the most necessary for their own support and maintenance of their households, in order to force workers on rations to produce a "fixed" product, and in order to maintain production at the level of the "bourgeois" economy during the first year of the war, it was necessary to employ the most intense coercive apparatus, including shooting, deprivation of bread rations, dooming to dying of starvation, and so on. "Departing from unlimited freedom, I arrived at unlimited despotism," so spoke Shigalev. Russia's experience of socialism proved that Spenser's fear of the "slavery of the future" was not an empty polemical phrase.⁵

Of course, the situation a man occupies in the productive process exerts influence on the human psyche. But not completely, and not to the degree Marxian socialism teaches. The differences in psyche between a "bourgeois" and a "proletarian," do not have even one-tenth the depth that might be measured in the psychological differences among people of different nations and races. In fundamental features, the psychology of a proletarian and a bourgeois is the same. Evidence of this is given by the evolution of the German Social-Democrats, that select congregation of the Marxist church. This was also confirmed with even greater force by the Russian revolution, carried out under the sign of Marxism, which cut the ground out from under the feet of those who thought that the German "fall" was explained by "opportunism" of the leaders, and by the detrimental influence of "revisionism." The Russian "proletariat" is innocent of the sin of "revisionism". . . .

What the Marxists imputed to the class particularly of the "bourgeoisie," turned out to be present in identical measure in the "proletariat." This is simply what is called "egoism," the self-assertion of a human being who recognizes his individuality. This self-assertion is a great and necessary life force, but each society can and must channel it into certain limits, outside of which it becomes destructive and socially dangerous. To achieve this goal, in the course of history, an extensive and wise network of canalization which regulates individual strivings was worked out. But in those places where this system of canalization is insufficient, it is necessary for the government to apply crude physical force. Its application is unavoidable, and comprises the holy obligation of every government. The lack of courage to take this obligation on itself was the mortal sin of the Russian progressive and socialist intelligentsia, who tried to replace the application of force with convincing conversation and school lessons. But a wise government knows that even the application of force has its limits, that, in this regard, too much is just as bad as too little. A bad government always sets in motion more coercion than is necessary. When a government has to insert its sword into the small social cells of human life, such a government is bad and short-lived. It takes upon itself a clearly unat-

5. Herbert Spencer (1820-1903) wrote an essay "The Coming Slavery," as part of a book, *The Man Against the State*, published in 1884. Objecting to "socialistic changes" achieved by acts of Parliament, Spencer said flatly that "all socialism involves slavery," in that it increases state control over the individual. *Ed.*

tainable task, because to fulfill its goal, it must transform three out of every five citizens into an official, a spy, and an armed policeman, against the two that remain. The government of the old order was bad, but, from this point of view, the Bolshevik government proved to be even worse. The fact that it adorned itself with the name "proletarian" to do this, in no way improves the situation. If it had not been for the basic falsehood of Marxian socialism, if it had been true that the proletariat possesses some kind of special socialist psyche, then perhaps the "dictatorship of the proletariat" might have been the means for some kind of marvelous overturn. But proletarians proved to be people, who in no way distinguished themselves from the "bourgeoisie." The "dictatorship of the proletariat" had the same tendency as the usual dictatorships of the usual groups that seize power. Such dictatorships either give birth to a Cromwell or Napoleon in their midst, who legalize that which was real in the shift of social forces which has taken place, or they perish, giving the country over to the mercy of predatory and, in the state sense, more powerful, neighbors. The Bolshevik "dictatorship of the proletariat," this precondition of a socialist overturn, very soon revealed its completely "bourgeois" character.

At the present time, socialists who are more cowardly and less honorable, although wiser, than the Bolshevik theoreticians, try to cast off responsibility for Russian events from socialism and heap it on the Bolsheviks. They willingly speak of, and cry about, the "errors" and even the "crimes" of the Bolsheviks, reserving for themselves the noble role of lawyers who plead for recognition of the circumstances which lessen the guilt of the accused, in view of his youth or the nobility of his intentions. This lawyer, criminal-police point of view, which at times, however, approximates harboring the criminals, must be decisively rejected. We can be interested only in the social and political side of the matter. From this perspective, in comparison with other Russian socialists, the Bolsheviks must be placed on a significantly higher level. These people finally had the courage to realize their ideas in life. They displayed the implementation of socialism. Socialism cannot be otherwise. One cannot expect other results from it. The lesson learned was terrible, but perhaps there was no other path to our recovery.

Now we must know how to distinguish that which is healthy in socialism, from those utopian fantasies that are so disastrous for the state and the people. Social reforms directed toward the gradual socialization of the productive forces of the national state which have matured for this, and democratic humanism inherited by socialism from Christianity—this is all that is valuable and vital in socialism. All the rest, namely the denial of nationality and "bourgeois statehood," the proclaimed class dictatorship, the terroristic means of spreading economic equality, etc., etc.—these are all literary fantasies that are based on an ignorance of human nature, and are pernicious for the people and the state that is surrendered to the strength of foreign armies by blind fanatics for the sake of socialist experiments.

Recovery

Nowhere are moral questions discussed so often and so intently as in Russia. Nowhere is it so customary to approach tasks of the practical ordering of life from one's own categorical imperative. The Russian intelligentsia has had a characteristic tendency toward continual moralizing. But this moralizing has been rather an intellectual exercise. It has not tempered the will, but weakened it, creating, from one perspective, incessant hesitation and doubt. It has always been most difficult of all for a member of the Russian intelligentsia to resolve anything, and he quite readily turns to the moral perplexities rising within him.

Therein lies a basic distinction from that spiritual style whose clearest representatives were the Puritans. With them a moral rigorism prevailed, which placed precise and sharp limits on the human will. Certain aspects of life were declared forbidden. While this made human existence more impoverished and boring, it preserved the store of strength allotted to man. In English Puritanism of the seventeenth century, a strong cast of will took shape which was placed at the service of God's cause, and which has left a deep imprint on the whole psychology of the English people. This must be said specifically about Anglo-Saxon sectarianism, which is little disposed to fanciful immersion into the lyrics of the soul. It is also alien to participants in the Biblical epos of Milton, and to the Pilgrim of Bunyan,¹ persecuted by his anxieties. How characteristic, in this case, is the difference between the German Herrenhuts and the English Methodists, who are similar at first glance. This moralism is saturated with will; it creates a kind of choleric temperament. Thought, nurtured in the assurance of a higher predestination, which Augustine and Calvin taught, is penetrated, not with the Eastern indifference of fatalism, but with a calm recognition of the definite place in the world that is indicated for each man and his life calling.

All of this is quite unlike the most widespread style of our intelligentsia. No literature contains such an extensive portrait gallery of superfluous people as the Russian. These superfluous people have no idea why they exist on this earth. Their moral doubts never end, before them is an endless series of questions, for which they are not able to find answers. That poetic haze with which Turgenev surrounded them is gradually clearing, and a collection of Chekhovian neurasthenics is being revealed to us. With them, you find yourself in a realm of weakness and lack of will, from which there seems to be no exit. Chekhov's hero can dream of an elegant and wonderful life, which might appear

1. John Milton, *Paradise Lost* and John Bunyan, *The Pilgrim's Progress*. Ed.

on earth a thousand years hence, but he is absolutely incapable of doing anything for the sake of its realization. On the whole, he can do nothing, either for himself or for others, and he is oppressed by his own emptiness. Nothing came out of life, although it might have. For even Chekhovian superfluous people, like their numerous forefathers, sensed the presence of some sort of possibilities in themselves. Remember those hysterical laments of a totally muddled Uncle Vania, about the thinker that had perished in him. And there really is some truth in this consciousness of possibilities never fated to be realized for, inherent in these people, there is undoubtedly the more worthy existence which they seek, though, at the same time, there is also a dangerous outward appearance of self justification.

But the main thing is that all these people are completely immersed in their own personalities. They are subjective in the highest degree. Looking and listening in the most transient state, they relate to the world around them with unhealthy indifference. It is as if their cosmic sense is deadened. Therefore, their perception of the world is very meager, even the perception of so healthy a forefather of the sickly favorites of the Chekhovian muse, as Lavretskii.² He saw in surrounding nature only the image of his own old age, the smoldering remains of his own useless life.

It is said the superfluous people represent only one aspect of the Russian intelligentsia that was created by temporary and passing circumstances. The older generation of them was composed of people doomed because they embodied a doomed milieu, membership in which has come to be taken as a kind of social "original sin." They were transformed into repentant noblemen. Chekhovian heroes are untimely heroes in another sense. They entered Russian life when everything striking, bold, daring, and heroic in it had been crushed, when small deeds had come to dominate. But neither the movements of the sixties, with their nihilistic protests, nor the *narodnik*'s going to the people, nor the Russian revolutionary movement, have a place here. The heroic ethics of the revolutionaries with their total selflessness, their total rejection of personal life, their total subjugation of this life to an objective cause—what have these in common with enervated subjectivism?

We shall put aside genealogical arguments about who gave birth to whom, and who descended from whom. Something else is more important—the fact that these striking contrasts are actually not so profound. And above all that the repentant nobleman is also the most genuine expression of the subjectivism of the intelligentsia. The repentant nobleman created the *narodnik* world view, which was distinguished primarily by a total inability to perceive social reality as it is, and which, in place of that reality, set up a completely fantastic situation where there were only two colors—rose and black. He even concocted a subjective method in the social sciences, which replaces cognizance

2. Lavretskii is the hero of I. S. Turgenev's *A Nest of Gentlefolk*, who manages to find a middle-aged equilibrium and adjustment after disappointments in life and love. *Ed.*

of truth with cognizance of one's own moods. He created the political and social program of *narodnichestvo*, in which questions of state and social structure are thought of as questions of one's own moral state, and receive answers determined by this moral mood. It is not surprising that this repentant nobleman, whose beliefs were so illusory and so little able to endure the test of the external world, had to give way to a completely groundless neurasthenic.

We can say this without any breach of historical justice. Historical justice must be rendered in full measure to those who wanted to repay the people for the debt incurred by their forefathers, and who wanted to repay it without hesitating before any sacrifices. This applies especially, not to the teachers, of course, but to the students who strove to introduce the teaching into life. But that same justice demands that all the groundlessness of *narodnichestvo*, all the false and pernicious habits of thought which it implanted, be denounced to the end. *Narodnichestvo* was a great obstacle on the path of the material as well as the spiritual development of Russia. For this development requires, above all, both a solicitous attitude toward, and a respect for, culture—it requires qualities which could be nourished least of all by *narodnichestvo*. *Narodnichestvo* preached only an equalizing justice in its most elementary form, a justice which inevitably must be understood as levelling downward. From this, for example, came that program of equal land division, which, had it ever been firmly realized, would have led to a general absence of rights, poverty, and a turn back of many centuries. But, after all, the premises of this program could be defended even by such people as N. K. Mikhailovskii, and the program could be adopted by whole political parties, which in any case exerted a great influence on Russian life.

What is the core of the falsehood here? It is once again in that reign of subjective moralism. In and of itself, the allocation of land is not a moral question at all. The only moral question is guaranteeing the individual adequate means of support and the demands that such a provision makes on the community. In this sense, any agrarian policy must always have only technical significance. Moreover, such a guarantee to the individual is hardly the only goal confronting the state or society. First of all, they have a general interest in the upgrading of the national economy, which makes it possible for the people as a whole to have access to the higher forms of statehood, to the creation of new cultural riches, and so on. All this is not only necessary for the realization of the right to an adequate existence—all this has a direct ethical significance. For one cannot simply reduce the good of the whole to the well-being of even all of the individuals who comprise it. Herein lies the error of the Bethamite formula for the highest good, as the greatest good for the greatest number of persons. The good of the state presupposes a higher reality behind the state and independent of its makeup. Every true statesman directly recognizes this reality. For him, the state in no way disintegrates into an endless multitude of citizens, which are, not only contemporary, but future to him. Meanwhile *narodnichestvo*, despite its name, and despite its readiness to sacrifice the most

indisputable rights and interests of the individual, saw the people only a mass of separate persons. More concretely, it saw a mass of Russian peasants, living in communes as if comprising an all-Russian *mir* with the addition of the intelligentsia who serve this people. *Narodnichestvo* never rose to the idea of a nation, therefore it was never able to nurture a healthy national feeling. It could not do so, because it proceeded from the narrow perspective of individual psychology. Thus its characteristic pathos of equality differs completely from Jacobin equality. The Jacobins, like Rousseau in the *Social Contract*, wanted equality as the basis for the legal authority of the whole over the individual citizen, and as the basis for the general will (*Volonté générale*). Our *narodniks* sought equality, so that no one would feel himself offended and cheated out of his fair share by the abundance of his neighbor. They preferred equality in the absence of rights, to the presence of rights in one part of the population of Russia. Thus, the indifference that is so incomprehensible for us—the indifference of the people of the seventies toward political freedom, at least to the only forms of its embodiment possible in Russia.

The greatest misfortune for Russia was the fact that this world view actually met halfway the habits of several centuries of popular thought. There, too, equalization had grown habitual, although this equalization was doubtlessly accompanied by a devaluation of the benefits shared in this way. This division into equal parts is naturally the simplest, not to say primitive, form, but it received a certain lawful recognition as something just. "We shouldn't have anyone well off, better let all be tattered," said the Saratov peasants in 1905, explaining the agrarian disorders, which even then were not limited to the landlords' estates, but which were directed against the more well-to-do peasants. The proposition of equal distribution was received sympathetically in the villages, even when it blatantly violated a sense of equality—such as in the distribution of food aid to those claiming it, whether they needed it or not. And the entire ruin of the land has taken place under the sign of such equalization.

Of course, the presence of these habits can hardly justify *narodnik* ideology. Ideology did not enlighten these dark instincts, but variously exacerbated them, surrounding them with the aura of some higher truth. Its representatives refused to see that time and again a simple feeling of envy passes at this point for a feeling of justice. They refused to see that an atmosphere is being created at this point that is lethal for the growth of individuality, for the selection of capabilities, and for the elevation of the general level. We hope that contemporary events will open the eyes of the many who are blind.

Thus, *narodnichestvo* itself is the clearest example of that bias we have noted in the thought and sensitivity of the intelligentsia. Nor can it be juxtaposed to the examples of the Russian revolutionaries. They were people of exceptional will and generally exceptional spiritual strength, but they themselves were least able to remain within the confines of the intelligentsia's world view. The very enormity of the task forced them to renounce a series of accepted conventional positions and agonizingly experience the contradic-

tions inherent in them. A genuine revelation of this inner spiritual side of the active revolutionary life were the works of Ropshin, *The Pale Horse* and *That, Which Was Not*.³ These works, one must say, found no sympathy in the circle of the author's confederates. They have accused him of violating tradition. They were especially displeased that Ropshin demonstrated the impossibility of preserving the initial psychology of revolutionary terror. Similarly, it is equally impossible to allude to the fact that the Russian movement could produce such thinkers as Plekhanov and Kropotkin. In any case, they belong to the West European world no less than to Russia. Dissimilar to the point of contradiction, they also have nothing in common with the typical representatives of the science and culture of revolutionary mass-meetings. However one-sided they were in their individual political and social views, they proceeded from a consciousness of the necessity, first of all, to understand the world around them as it exists, independent of human desires. They always felt the need for rich and varied experience. They had a vital inquisitiveness. And when their vital intuition of reality diverged from the party views they were close to, they unhesitatingly gave preference to this intuition. Thus, they stood fast on the question of the war, undaunted by the fact that they found sympathy only in those circles where they were used to meeting their political and ideological opponents.

But all this has to do with the revolutionary aristocracy, and from it nothing can be concluded about the plebs—those rank and file revolutionaries who worked in the underground, and who, deprived of the possibility of continuing this work, went off to the north, the east and so on, and emigrated. Despite its miserable external conditions, life in Siberian exile, in any case, usually turned out to be less destructive for them than residence abroad. In Siberia they more easily entered into contact with real life; they more easily found a cause which led them out of the accepted party clichés and poured a fresh current into the mind and heart. All young Siberian society was indissolubly joined to these political exiles, and only their attraction made possible the cultural work for which there was such great demand there. The more intelligent and enlightened administrators understood this, and they themselves would recruit people with a political record quite reprehensible in their eyes.

On the other hand, if one had to seek an environment where the entire pathology of the Russian intelligentsia would be revealed with exceptional clarity, it would have to be sought in our emigrant colonies, with their complete detachment from the surrounding life and people, as if these colonies were surrounded by a race completely foreign to them, with their ignorance even of the language of these people, and with their absence of interest in such centers of universal civilization as Paris and London. Oppressive material need

3. V. Ropshin (pseud. for B. V. Savinkov, 1879-1925) was himself an S. R. political terrorist. The novel *Pale Horse*, in diary form, describes the moral and psychological disintegration of a terrorist. *Ed.*

does not arouse the energy to search for a way out, but ultimately somehow undermines it. All the time was spent in mutual reproaches, arguments, in courts of arbitration; all intellectual life was exhausted on discussions of program themes and protest meetings. Only a few proved capable of somehow using their existence abroad to achieve a broader education; only a very few were able to penetrate the life of the country where fate had brought them. The majority only thickened that unbearable atmosphere of hysterical powerlessness, characteristic of our colonies, which often gave foreigners so false an impression of Russian national character, and which still awaits its chronicler.

Our revolutionary parties, so long struck by the afflictions of the underground and emigration, could not liberate themselves from these even when the path of free political activity opened before them. Thus it was in the years 1905-06, thus it was in incomparably greater degree in 1917, when they achieved influence and authority. And what a high price Russia paid for this!

Subjective moralism is one of the elements of spiritual life necessary for its full harmony. But the Russian intelligentsia suffered from its completely exaggerated development, as a result of which, equilibrium in its spiritual life was impossible. At present, all admit the inevitability of a fundamental rupture in all traditional world views, of a basic change in our usual intellectual structure. Without this, the words which are now on everyone's lips—"the national renaissance of Russia"—will remain only words.

Preachers of this renaissance often suffer from excessive faith in the strength of their own appeals. They themselves easily become victims of moralizing rationalism. And what do the words mean, after that fiery test which Russia was given? These irresistible inclinations and changes, these ebbs and flows in the true spiritual nature of a people aroused by unprecedented catastrophes, evade the powers of a preacher. He can only be the herald of a new day, which is already breaking because its time has arrived in the inscrutable plan of God. The task of people who keenly feel their responsibility for what has been done and not done—is not to try to heal, but only to indicate the paths of healing. More precisely, they must translate into ordinary language the healing creativity which has already spontaneously begun.

If one seeks this path for our intelligentsia, which in particular underwent such a severe crisis that its very existence was threatened, then, to use words so often repeated now, it is in need of a new spiritual orientation. To a far greater degree, it must live with interest in the objective world, with the pathos of objectivity. For, scrutinizing its usual subjectivism, in the final analysis, we do not even find a sound and steady moral core. It thought to find the law of life in a moral norm, and, time after time, it took as this norm its own and others' moods. We always capitulated before psychology, because we considered it—however abstract our views—the only effective force. Reference to such "psychological necessity" was considered serious justification, even for such

obviously and patently ruinous political errors as the Vyborg Appeal.⁴ Above all, we always attempted to catch the mood, ascribing to it some sort of unlimited possibilities. However, experience has shown that success often belongs to the groups which do not at all hesitate before such doubts. Here is the source of Stolypin's victories over the First Duma, and the Bolsheviks' victory over the Provisional Government. And along with this, we so often proved to be unprepared because of our disregard of objective possibilities. The military unpreparedness of our government differed, so to speak, quantitatively but not qualitatively, from society's unpreparedness.

But these are errors of a tactical order, from which societies and peoples are weaned only through bitter object lessons. What is important here, is the principle. Such subjective psychologism too easily becomes pure opportunism. For whenever all attention is focused on one's own and others' experiences, and the latter are given a determining meaning, there surely is no place for norms, for precepts, and for principles, which have existence independent of spiritual conditions. Hence, our dangerous tendency to substitute for genuine evaluations of facts and actions based on convincing evidence, assertions of our own or others' sympathies and antipathies towards them. In calling an action sympathetic and antipathetic, we assume the binding force of our taste. However strange it seems, when we sympathize or antipathize on the basis of psychological impressionism or psychological routine—not even according to our direct feeling, but because it is accepted to do so—then a fierce intolerance is born, which, of course, has not the justifications which moral rigorism can have. And intolerance turns, no longer against the goals, but against the often quite varied means leading to the goals.

Thus is created the greatest spiritual delusion, which is so widespread in the life of the Russian intelligentsia. The goal and the means become confused. The absolute and the relative change places. For the absolute is repudiated, it is only quantitatively distinguished from various relative forms in which it is embodied; while the relative is elevated to the absolute. In this way, man sins against both the first and the second Commandments of Moses.⁵

We have already noted what heavy guilt rests on our *narodnichestvo* in this. Its ethic was purely psychological, its sociology was founded on a peculiar social animism. The course of the world could be directed exclusively by decisions of the human will, which possesses an innumerable choice of possibilities. Russia might be directed along the stereotypical path of West European capitalism, but she might also be led to the shores of social harmony, of social Arcadia.

4. The Vyborg Appeal or Manifesto in July, 1906 was an ill-fated attempt to arouse civil resistance because of the government's closing of the First Duma. The reference here implies that the act was more a reflection of the psychology of resistance than a product of political common sense. *Ed.*

5. "Thou shalt have no other gods before me" and "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image." *Ed.*

Our village commune could be destroyed, but it could also be strengthened forever. This *narodnik* methodology, if one can call it that, left even deeper traces on the intelligentsia's thought than any other concrete *narodnik* construct.

This is the great service of Russian Marxism, one which must be admitted even by people who are quite distant from the convictions of Marxism. Its struggle with *narodnichestvo* was, methodologically, a struggle for the right of objective knowledge. It did not matter that the teaching about the class basis of human thought itself was an obvious denial of this objective knowledge. It did not matter that later Russian Social-Democracy assimilated all the basic faults of the *narodnik* world view, that it often incorporated them with the goal of simple demagoguery, with the goal of not falling behind in the political auction. In its original testaments, Marxism appealed to economic realism; it destroyed false *narodnik* idealism, and thereby, despite the desire of its representatives, facilitated the affirmation of true idealism in Russia. The very transitions "from Marxism to idealism," of course, are not fortuitous. Marxist utopia collapses; it gives way to social reformism. And so it is necessary for it to seek new sources of pathos, which cannot be found in the barren wastelands of economic materialism. But if this overcoming of Marxism was a necessary manifestation of spiritual maturity, Marxism was its own sort of preparatory school.

At the present time, Russian culture has already left this school far behind, and it is faced with embodying this striving for objectivity, above all, in science and art, understood as self-sufficient in their own right. In the *narodnik* understanding, they must serve the people, and this service is conceived of as a more or less trivial moral utilitarianism. There is no awareness that these functions of the human spirit have their own life, intolerant of any law applied from without. In this lies, among other things, the task of organizing a truly scientific school and education, which must guard against such utilitarianism, and affirm an awareness that the very usefulness of science is linked with its disinterestedness. The democratization of society will evoke a special demand for the distribution of knowledge. Expressed in economic terms, the guarantee of concerns about its distribution may even distract attention and strength from its production. The universal catastrophe we have undergone, so inaccessible to the foresight of human reason, and so upsetting to its presumptuous calculations, may leave profound skepticism. For us Russians, this mood is more dangerous than for a people with a more stable social psyche and stronger traditions. In no way falling into any superstitious cults, science must not lose consciousness of its objective significance, which is persuasive despite all psychological, social, and tribal differences.

The very same may be said about art. The *narodnik* world view characteristically assigns art a purely servile place—in its eyes art must be tendentious. The history of the Wanderers gave an example of the aesthetic degradation to which this leads. Here, in general, Russian culture was dealt a blow that has not

yet been satisfactorily evaluated. Poets and artists had to turn themselves into moralizing *belles-lettrists*. The need and feeling for beauty was suppressed, and the young generations were raised in this sense, with barbaric carelessness. Pushkin was surrounded by cold official acknowledgers, and Tiutchev remained as though completely unnoticed. Not that long ago our eyes were still afflicted with a kind of blindness, and we indifferently passed over the great treasures of Russian icon painting. True, a great change has taken place in this regard. Once and for all, new Russian art has won recognition of its independence. New poetry has also found unforeseen possibilities of embodiment in our language. One might better speak of an exaggerated and insincere aestheticism, which became a fad and an attitude, and even of a unique aesthetic anarchism. But these tasteless and disappointing distortions must not in any way shake awareness of the objective power of art—even in its most subjective, lyrical forms. This strength is as inherent in Lermontov as it is in Pushkin, in Chopin as in Beethoven. L. N. Tolstoi's attempt to refute it, refutes itself. We may be sure that the opposite extreme—the reign of cold and conventional “Parnassian” art, the art of form, its exclusive cult—cannot become firmly established here.

Russian philosophy similarly is entering its proper path. *Narodnichestvo* saw in philosophy the *magistrix vitae*.⁶ It superstitiously feared metaphysics, just as it feared pure art. Not long ago, in Russia, one could still encounter an evaluation of philosophical strivings based on a completely tangential criterion—the extent to which they answer to a political or social movement. One should hope that this truly barbaric attitude toward human thought will not revive at the present time. The most dangerous thing of all is that this moralizing subjectivism, so characteristic of us, will enter intellectual work itself and distort it. It is dangerous, for example, that we allow the problems of the world to become a kind of construct of completely relative truth about the world, the creation of a sort of moral working hypothesis. However, one must say, that this danger is decreased by the distinct character of recent philosophical creation in Russia, which clearly gravitates toward ontology. If one may speak of a Russian national philosophy, then its spiritual atmosphere seems to be saturated with objective reality. One must not be reconciled to the dissolution of philosophy into the theory of knowledge which is so characteristic of Germanic thought. The most powerful and brilliant current in Russian philosophy affirms universality; it does not shut itself up in the artificial patterns of individual intellectual games. In light of this ideal of universality, we were taught better to evaluate our own place in the universe. After all, any exaggerated and sick subjectivism is also a defection from universality.

All of this is most important as it applies to the moral world. The Russian soul will not depart from the moral world, even if it has lost its way in the kingdom of demonic temptations that opened before it. When the Russian

6. “Arbiter of life,” *Ed.*

soul comes to its senses, this immense mass of committed and tolerated evil and suffering will provoke both immense sympathy and burning sorrow. The path to renascence leads through invisible tears of great repentance. And this renascence requires something more, a turning once again from the self to the surrounding world. One must understand the ethical sense of those of its elements which tower above personal life. One must find it in such principles as nationality, state, and culture, even if at present our spiritual structure has pushed away from them, and even if they seem cold and soulless to our feelings. A spiritual inclination beckoning towards freedom from them gives birth to tempting phantoms. For individuality itself becomes contentless and barren, as it loses its ties with these objective, moral, and in this sense generally obligatory principles.

There are two basic types of moral philosophy. The representatives of one separate the world of noumenal being from the world of phenomenal necessity, leaving man under the authority of an insoluble dualism. Such was the philosophy of Kant. The representatives of the other type find a higher synthesis between them, they affirm the ontological basis of moral norms. Such was the teaching of Plato. Only in this type can the human spirit find satisfaction. For a norm, set before us only as a norm, might belong to the world of phantoms, illusions, and fixed ideas. The autonomy assigned to moral law, as if to elevate it, makes its obligatoriness incomprehensible. The ethic of duty, with all its rigorism, with all its mercilessness towards the strongest and deepest human feelings, transforms itself into an ethic of a distinctive, perhaps impersonal, but collective, mood. The moral despotism of Brand⁷ repulses people, and attracts them only when it gives them the image of some real manifestation, of some church on a mountain, which not only must, but also can, be constructed. Morality, through its own powers, can never reveal this reality of good; and at this point the realm of religion reveals itself. For if religion reveals itself to us in the secret depths of our spirit, then is not religious experience the very basis of the life of the individual, the guarantee that inherent in it is the very highest objectivity, that is, independence from the feelings of religious experience. And against man's morbid concentration on his individual experience, religious consciousness itself arises and, in calling man to humility, it liberates him from oppressive loneliness and introduces a joyous peace into his soul. Then the cold and incomprehensible commands of the categorical imperative, become a yoke which is good, and a burden which is light.

Before our eyes, the greatest shock to all the moral foundations of the Russian people occurred, and if we are at all capable of understanding anything in our ordeals, we must understand that these very foundations rested on the deeper foundation of popular faith. When that faith was destroyed, and replaced by a monstrous cult of self-will and class hatred, the great, coming catas-

7. From the play by Henrik Ibsen, *Brand* (1865). *Ed.*

trophe was also predetermined. But precisely here was expressed the instinct of spiritual self-preservation of the people, which despite all pressure and all temptations, responded to the call of the bell of its native temple. We are not yet able to appraise the full force of the religious revival, which doubtless has begun; and we do not know how deeply this will to faith and to the Church has been aroused in the soul of the Russian intelligentsia. Only one thing can be said with confidence. If the mood of moralizing subjectivism proved to be vitally unfounded, then any attempt by the cultured class to build its life on a rejection of, and withdrawal from, moral demands will prove equally unfounded. But these questions will cease to be expressed in sterile, agonizing, and soul-shaking shocks only when they are recognized as religious quests. For there are no contradictions that are unbearable for our feelings and our mind, which would not be resolved in Divine Wisdom and in Divine Love.

The Russian intelligentsia must seek to restore its strengths, now so cruelly broken, at the inexhaustible sources of life. And then, recovered from its longstanding intellectual perversions and spiritual diseases, it will find in itself both a willingness and an ability to begin the task of the creative restoration of Russia, which now seems like a heap of ruins, and which gives witness to the great sin committed, and to the great retribution already borne.

The Roar of the Tribe

"The peoples roar, as mighty waters roar; but He threatened them, and they ran away and were driven like chaff by the wind on the mountain and dust in the storm."

—Isaiah, 17:13¹

"It is time to recognize that human reason is not limited by the force which it draws from the narrow present—that there is another force in it which, combining in one thought both time past and time promised, forms its original essence and raises it up into the true sphere of its activity."

—Chaadaev,
Philosophical Letters, I

I

At night when all around slept, I went out to listen on Red Square. There, I am told, great wonders happen. The dead, who were buried without a funeral service, moan at night, rise from their graves, and, remembering their last battle, try to scale the walls of the sleeping Kremlin. But the holy walls are unassailable, and the dead fall down, gnashing their teeth; and once again they bury themselves in the ground and moan, frightening the residents who hide behind tightly locked shutters. There, I am told, St. Nicholas, the miracle-working prelate of Rus', took up arms for Holy Rus' on the day of the collapse, and believers received miraculous strength and healing from his sword.

But the Square was silent and nothing could be seen on it. The dark churches rose motionlessly to the sky, and the walls peered, black and ominous. Only the shadows of sentinels moved with measured steps among the battlements. I imagined that I was living three centuries ago, and that before me were the Old-Russian shrines, imprisoned and voiceless. . . . It was too early.

1. In both the 1918 and the 1967 Russian editions of *Out of the Depths*, this passage is incorrectly noted as Psalms 17, 12, here and at the end of the chapter. *Ed.*

I went on farther and entered a great boundless field, without end, without border: and that field was Russia. There was an undefiled silence, the land and forests smelled of a rising and blossoming youth. And I bowed like a penitent to the damp mother earth. I sought strength in her, and I knew that in me was her elder son, Mikula—the Plowman, and her younger son, Alësha—the Beloved.² She will provide both of them with unheard of strength, lead them in battle with her blessing, and arm them with authority, strength, and holiness.

Here too all was silent, and only the birds twittered in the forest with a springlike sound, a goose on the wing honked, and a hare cried plaintively. But I knew the ineffable word, and I knew the forbidden place.

At my word, it was no longer an unknown field, but it was named Kulikovo Field,³ and on the morrow a battle was expected there between invisible, but great hosts. And I stood between the sides and listened to the language of both camps, as once Dmitrii had done.

At first nothing was audible. Then in one camp I heard noise and indecent gaiety. There was the rumble of song and the din of breaking vessels, the sound of cymbals, drunken curses, and the clatter of devilish dances. Voices of many languages sounded in a blasphemous mixture, and it seemed that innumerable peoples had rallied together with Russian infidels, to march, with thievery and destruction, against the holy places of Russia.

In the other camp there was a great silence, and I did not know what to think. What did the silence signify? Of what future was it an omen?

But night was passing; the distance paled and was obscured by fog. It seemed as if the horde was singing and making merry more mutedly and weakly, until it fell completely silent. And now, something occurred in the other silent camp. A terrible noise arose, and shuddering resonantly it resounded in the silence. It seemed to me that they were beating innumerable kettledrums or blowing thousands of horns all at once. The sounds grew louder, and it was no longer the noise of people, but the rumble of the sea. And the sea, it seemed, was rising and raging, howling with an intensifying, howling roar, and smashing the surrounding shores with monstrous force. And I understood that it was not the roar of the sea, but the roar of the people, the roar of the tribe.

In terror, I hastened to flee from this unbearable roar, which filled the universe with its thunder; but there was nowhere for me to hide. Like a booming wave it came over me, and I knew that now I would be in the power of the elements, and I also would roar with an inhuman voice, drowning out all the

2. These are two of the heroes (*bogatyri*) of the old-Russian legends (*byliny*). Mikula—the Plowman (Selianinovich) a peasant hero, characterized by strength and skill in work, was among the elder *bogatyri*; Alësha—the Beloved, also called *Popovich* and best known for his slaying of Tugarin the serpent's son, was among the younger *bogatyri*. *Ed.*

3. The Kulikovo Field was the scene of the victory of Dmitrii Donskoi over the Tatars in 1380. *Ed.*

noises of the earth. The devouring wave reached me, and I submitted to it. It caught me up, and bore me on its crest. I saw that it was made up entirely of others such as I, and that its movement was from innumerable running people, its roar from their innumerable voices, and its strength from their single passion, moved by faith.

I ran and flowed with them, and since that hour my fear is no longer in me. There is only their great hope, their terrible indignation, and their irresistible will to smash the opposite shore.

II

In ancient times, the Russian people found its truth. That was Russia. And this truth was acquired by the entire, undivided Russian people of that time, its higher strata and its common people alike. Then, class contradictions were, perhaps, even sharper than now. In any case, hatred by the oppressed for the oppressors was no less. The history of the formation of the Cossacks, the movement of runaways to the borderlands, the separate rebellions and bloody reprisals bear witness to the fact that there is nothing new in the most extreme manifestations of social revolution in Russia. But the soul of the Russian people was then united. And whether a person sat in the Boiars' Duma, saved his soul in the hermitages, worked the soil, or pillaged along the roads, it was one and the same Russian people. It lived by a single world view. And that world view comprised the key to all its accomplishment.

That world view was Russia. Holy Rus' is not a legend and not a metaphor. It existed in fact, not in that saccharine, fairy tale form which artists and poets paint, but in the form of a vital whole, full of unique beauty, sounds, and images, and, in any case, of a great vitality. At times, it appeared "enveloped in the clothes of a humble beggar" and revealed its holiness in contemplation and elevated prayer. At other times, it set off on passionate, earthly quests, forgot God in favor of an abundant and carnal truth, and in this it also thought itself holy, for it sacrificed everything for the sake of this apparent truth.

The foundation of the world view of old Rus' was its unprecedented wholeness of spirit. Russian man then, as now, always threw himself into extremes, committed crimes side by side with spiritual exploits. There was no bifurcation between thought and action in him. He did not know thought, in the sense that we understand it today. For him, thought, sensation, feeling, and the action which flows from them, were one and the same. In Russian history one is struck by an unusual feature, which seems at first glance to be an absence of consciousness. We find a lack of what is called logic equally in the chance accumulation of business in the Muscovite chancelleries that functioned without any system or rule, in the old Russian songs and stories, and in the reflections of people of that time. Old-Russian speech itself appears to have a clumsy and contradictory structure; its judgments do not sound like judgments,

but like descriptions of chance feelings, unrelated by thought. At first, these appear to be simple indications of backwardness, of cultural weakness, and a comparison with the activity of savages involuntarily suggests itself.

However, if we regard these phenomena thoughtfully, and especially if we recall that on their basis, and through them, a powerful state arose, then our attitude toward them must change. We will see that even where there was no meaning of the kind we were looking for, there was all the same another meaning, hidden from us by our inability to grasp it. We will see that all the unconnected and seemingly contradictory manifestations, in fact, possessed great reality indicating their inner connection. We will understand that where there was no thought in the European sense, there was, perhaps, more than thought—there was an integral sensation of reality. Thought did enter into it, but did not dominate; thought did not manage man, tearing him from reality. In this sensation of reality, thought was subordinated to the action of all man's being, of all his combined capacities, and therefore it did not create any bifurcation in him.

This original wholeness was the strength of Old-Russian man. It directed all his actions. He prayed in wholeness, loved and hated in wholeness, created and destroyed in wholeness. And all of Old-Russian culture bore the imprint of this wholeness. Authority in the area of statehood, the Church in the area of collective spiritual life, and ascetics in the area of personal spiritual achievement, were products of this wholeness. The Russian people knew nothing of abstract concepts, the fruits of detached intellectuality. Its attachment to rituals was not chance, but full of profound meaning. Ritual is a mystical act, and all believers take part in it. It is like the eternal order of the life of the *sobor* body. The defense of ritual, by zealots of the Old Belief, was a defense of the signs and the words which expressed the mysterious structure of the Church, its manifestation in history. Ritual is a rule, and its significance is that it connects people past, present, and future. Ritual transcends time and remains a suprapersonal principle. Ritual is not established once and for all, but lives its own life, incommensurate for the individual while he remains in his own small and narrow circle. Only in conjunction with the entire whole, does the individual man acquire the authority necessary to judge ritual. Until then, ritual remains sacred and obligatory.

The roots of action in Old Russia, and the entire world view that conditioned it, are in Orthodoxy. The inner essence of Orthodoxy is its self-sufficient fullness. Catholicism is a solid cliff which supports man from without. Orthodoxy is a gentle wave, which as it penetrates him also surrounds him on all sides. Catholicism cuts everything, Orthodoxy penetrates everything. The spirit of Orthodoxy is an all-embracing spirit. It does not know division and separation. There is a striking difference between these religions, in relation to elements which stand outside the Church. Catholicism sweeps them aside, or, on the contrary, conquers them. It proceeds from a recognition of them as external elements, strange and foreign to itself. The Orthodox Church simply does not

know them. They do not exist for it. It knows only that which is found within its enclosure. It judges only those who are already within this enclosure. In Orthodoxy, in its genuine, most pure teachings, there are none who are not Orthodox, for only those who are Orthodox, exist.

This character of Orthodoxy has the greatest significance. It reflected in itself the essence of the Russian world view, and was its most profound basis.

This feature of Russian religion is a philosophical revelation. It is the key to the solution of the most difficult and complicated dilemmas. Where there is only inner truth, where the external always appears only as the internal and also gives content to that internal, there fullness and wholeness are achieved, which resolve the conflicts of subject and object, consciousness and being, and other seeming contradictions.

Everything in such a teaching is concrete. An abstract divinity appears only in those teachings where people juxtapose themselves to God. In Orthodoxy, it is impossible to juxtapose oneself to anything because in Orthodoxy everything is internal. God is not at all construed, but sensed from within, just as the truth of the Church is sensed by each of its members from within, and is not a law imposed by someone from without. This is especially clear in the question of the confirmation of dogma. In Catholicism, everything is founded on the formal authority of the higher Church power. In Orthodoxy, every believer is himself this power, when secretly, in *sobor* unity, he spiritually links himself with other believers.

The Old-Russian world view established a vital and indissoluble link of the present with the past. For the Old-Russian man, what his fathers and grandfathers did in the past was eternally living, was present in his affairs, and directed them. He honored the mysterious links of time, and the Perfect God was sensed by him, identically, in the beginning and at the end of the historical process. The Russian man lived, in fact, between the Nativity and the Resurrection.

The link with the past in Old Russia was not established by the mind, nor through a rational cognition of history, but through a cognition of wholeness, through a perception of the past in action, through the entire being of Old-Russian man. He existed not outside of history, but inside it, and he did not think it, but lived it. And this comprised the miraculous forces, which, despite the absence of intellectual rationalization of his actions, guaranteed their authority over surrounding life. In these actions was life itself, and he did not change it from without, but it was reborn and altered within him. The deeds of Old-Russian people serve as a notable example of the unity and indivisibility of thought and action. Then, there was no theory, only realization. But this realization was not blind. It was inspired by a whole cognition of the Great Action which includes the Small Action of individual man. This Great Action was the action of the historical, *sobor* whole. The link of time is one and the same as the link of people, past and present, united in that whole. *Sobornost'* and temporality are inseparable.

What was the Old-Russian individual? Can one say that it was dissolved in the *sobor* whole? It is impossible to approach this question without first having liberated oneself from the false and perverted view that some kind of opposition exists between the individual and the *sobor* whole. Such an opposition, in fact, exists between individualism, which locks all of life into the limits of a single individual, and socialism, which destroys the individual in a mechanical unification of people. The latter is not a *sobor* whole, but simply a herd or a horde. The vital individual and the vital, concrete, *sobor* whole are inextricably linked, and mutually enter into and mutually enrich each other. It is senseless to speak of a comparison of their volume, about the fact that the *sobor* whole includes the individual, or the other way around, as some idealists would have it. The relationship of the two wholes is not spatial, but internal. The individual gives content to the *sobor* whole, enriching it with his uniqueness from which streams the inexhaustibility of the whole. The whole broadens the horizons of the individual by including in them all things, all people, and all the world with its present and its past.

The consummate ideal of the Old-Russian world view was the Kingdom of God on earth. Consciousness approached this ideal, simultaneously, though the Church and the state, merging them in the image of a great, initially Russian, then universal, theocracy. The great questions which eternally concern mankind, which underlie equally the resolution of the just state and the social revolution, would doubtlessly have found a more satisfactory answer in such a social-spiritual structure, than in any of the contemporary Utopias and Atlantises. The stumbling block of the contemporary state and, equally, the main obstacle for social revolution, lies in the impossibility of constructing perfect law, given imperfect people. But where people arrive at laws through religion, that very act destroys in their souls the poisonous seeds which hamper their intercourse with other people, and their uncoerced internal subjection to *sobor* rule.

It does not follow, of course, to suppose that such a world view was peculiar to the Russian people alone. In greater or lesser degree, such a condition existed among all peoples who lived through an active and full religious life. In juxtaposing Russian to European culture in its latter phases, beginning with the period of the Reformation, we juxtapose to that part of European culture, the culture of ancient and eastern peoples. But in Europe itself there is an almost identical divergence between the world view created by the Catholic Church, and that which took shape after the Renaissance and Reformation, in the purely intellectual philosophy of the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries.

That by which we so-called "cultured people" now live, is not the property of the culture of all mankind, or even of all European culture, but only the fruit of the distorted thinking of one brief epoch. In periods of such distortion, human thought seems to turn away from its proper course, which is com-

mon to all times and all peoples. This thought tears itself away from action and begins to live a kind of game of its own, through the illusory brilliance of a false imitation of life. This thought adorns itself with unusual colors, creates images of inimitable art and intellectual beauty. But this barren flower of thought, despite all this splendid adornment, yields fruits of action that are, in their unimportance, completely incommensurate with its grand and multifaceted theoretical blossoming.

III

On the dividing line between the ancient and contemporary periods of Russian history, arises the figure of Peter the Great. In a great spiritual overturn, Peter embodied the spirit of maximalism long inherent in the Russian people. He wished to go to the limit, to do, at once, what had been growing and ripening gradually.

Peter served as a sort of chief obstetrician in the "Europeanization" of Russia. In hacking off the heads of the *streltsy* or shaving the beards of the *boiars*, the great emperor implanted Europe into Russia, and knocked into Muscovite heads new ideas borrowed from Europe, in place of the old. And the passionate opposition which Peter met was, not the opposition of individual fanatics and backward barbarians, but the opposition of the whole Old-Russian world view. Of course, Peter did not conquer it by himself, rather, by this time, it had decomposed to a significant degree by itself, and only this explains Peter's victory and the Europeanization of Russia.

There is no doubt that the receptiveness of Russian people to Western influence also expressed a basic feature of their character—their search for ultimate truth, wherever it might be. Russian people could not resist what Western culture promised in this sense. In their concrete way of thinking, it was truth, because it imperiously invaded their life and appeared there in tangible images and forms.

The time of Peter initiates a separation of the educated classes from the people, and the adoption by them of a new Western world view. The people remained with the old. Right up to our own time, it lived with the store of ideas, beliefs, and psychological and effective habits, accumulated in the Middle Ages of Russian history. It continued to live historically, perceiving events and partaking of them in an integral, effective way. But the tragic situation of our people lies in the fact that the people cannot exist without a link to the educated strata that it always held at a distance. For the people, they were like the fruit-bearing part of the plant—a necessary organ, which renews its life and advances its development. With two cultures, we found ourselves in a situation where part of the people receiving an education thereby immediately adopted a world view foreign to the people, broke away from the people, and lived beyond all ties with Russian history. Because of this, our old world

view was not able to develop. Not developing, it had to wither and die. For three centuries it held on, despite the bitter war declared against it by the intelligentsia, and for three centuries the Russian state persisted through it. Finally, toward the beginning of the nineteenth [twentieth]⁴ century, the people appeared entirely without a world view. The old world view had died, it had not assimilated a new one.

The Russian old regime was much closer to the people than the intelligentsia. It not only mechanically relied on the people, it was, along with everything that surrounded and nourished it, the part of Russian educated society that preserved a link with its history. For all the errors of the old regime, one must admit that up to the last day it remained at its post, and did what it considered possible to save the remnants of the spiritual heritage bequeathed to it by the past. However, the general tragedy of Russian reality told on it. The regime was powerless to change its educated strata for the people. A regime cannot compensate for a lack of public opinion. And its separation from the latter soon reflected on it in the most total manner. It ceased to be receptive to progress. It ceased to refresh itself with an influx of fresh forces and ideas. It ossified and decayed. And little by little, as the world view artificially defending it died, the Russian regime also died. One ought to be amazed that it lasted so long.

But where did the Russian intelligentsia come from? And why did it break away from the people? The world view of the Russian intelligentsia, in the form in which it existed in the nineteenth century, is very definite. Into it entered an aggregate of ideas which reflected all the main currents of European thought. But the distinguishing feature of this entire world view lies in the fact that these ideas were adopted with the maximalism of the Russian soul. Without hesitation, they were taken to the extreme. From them were drawn, dispassionately, all the ultimate, most severe and most absurd conclusions. The Russian intelligentsia remained Russians; in European revelations they sought the ultimate religious truth. And in each idea, in each theory, they extracted it assiduously, stopping short of nothing.

Another feature of this world view derives from its content, from the main basis on which modern European culture, in general, is constructed. This basis is intellectualism, in its worst form. The concept of intellectualism is broader than the concept of rationalism, related to the philosophical tendency begun by Descartes and leading up to Kant. German philosophers, having risen up against Leibnitz and other rationalists, nonetheless remained intellectualist. Any thought separated from action is intellectualist. Activists, prophets, and

4. Both the 1918 and the 1967 Russian editions refer to the nineteenth century in this sentence. The whole sense of this discussion, however, would be more coherent if the line read twentieth century. Most likely there was a typographical error in the first edition, then dutifully copied. *Ed.*

apostles are unintellectual in comparison with philosophers. And only the prophetic, which we find in certain philosophers, has saved them from their basic philosophical inadequacy. The main sign of intellectualism is the separation of thought from action. Intellectual thought ponders things in general, abstract concepts, qualities, and categories. The opposite of intellectual thought is concrete thought, which always has in view the "thisness" of the object it considers. Concrete thought is always historical thought, and the same can be said of the history of a thing, a man, a nation, and the history of God. The essence of concrete thought is comprehension of the past as the only reality. And this comprehension must necessarily be, not intellectualist, but holistic, involving all of man's being.

From this it is clear why the intelligentsia tore away from the people, and repudiated the Old-Russian world view. European culture is constructed on principles which were in complete opposition to all the foundations of this world view.

Highly significant are the thoughts on this subject of a writer who is considered one of the originators of the Russian intelligentsia, and is sometimes reckoned among the Westerners. This is Chaadaev. Chaadaev stands apart in our history. With brilliant intuition, even in his own time, he seems to have recognized the process underway—the tearing away of Russian intellectual life from its religious and national roots. In the words of Chaadaev we find a description of the Russian tragedy: "We live in the present alone, without a past or future." "Every new idea crowds out the old without leaving a trace, because it does not flow from the old, but turns up from God knows where." "We advance in time in such a strange way, that with our every step forward the preceding moment disappears irretrievably for us" (*Philosophical Letters*, I).

Chaadaev's error is that he ascribes to the entire Russian people that which ought to be applied only to its educated part. According to Chaadaev's explanation, this occurred as a consequence of a peculiarity of Russia, as a consequence of the fact that she did not quite belong to the general European family. In a most profound explanation, he attributed our misfortunes to the separation of the Churches. He pictured recovery in the guise of a readoption of universal Western principles, preserved in united, Catholic Christianity. Chaadaev stood entirely on the point of view of a non-intellectual whole culture, and, in essence, he was not a forefather, but rather an ardent enemy, of the true world view of the intelligentsia. But if one of his most profound delusions was a failure to understand that Old-Russian culture had been eliminating most of the inadequacies he noticed in Russian life, above all its isolation from history, his other delusion was the opinion that contemporary Western culture was entirely constructed on the religious and effective basis embodied in Catholicism. Chaadaev preached Russia's acceptance of that which no longer prevailed in the West, but which, on the contrary, had already been rejected by it. Con-

temporary abstract European thought grew out of a struggle with Christianity and Catholicism. And it is obvious that one cannot pose the question of two cultures: one Orthodox, Eastern, and Russian; the other Western, Catholic, and contemporary. One can pose the question of medieval religious culture, with its two branches, the Catholic and the Orthodox, and the contemporary, non-religious culture juxtaposed to it. The most consistent expression of the latter is, in the spiritual area—the Russian intelligentsia's frame of mind, and in the material area—German militarism. On one side stands religion and historical reality; on the other, abstract thought, which is equally pernicious and destructive, whether it be embodied in the guise of the achievements of a social revolution or of a universal, military empire.

The Russian intelligentsia's world view is an abstract construction of life, taken to the extreme. At the bases of Russian socialism, and to a significant degree of liberalism, lies a denial of history, a complete denial and repudiation of the reality of what is taking place. The thought of the intelligentsia is thought in general about man, the world, and the state, and not thought about this man, this world, and this state.

All contemporary humanity is infected with theoretical delusions. But they reached an unprecedented level in our intelligentsia. They found receptive soil in the conditions of the development of the Russian intelligentsia, isolated from the people and authority, forced to work in the atmosphere of the underground. The character of this work, which was separated from reality and deprived of the possibility of having its calculations tested by implementation, raised a whole generation of people with irresponsible thought.

The fate of the intelligentsia has its poetic prototype in the ruin of one of the elder *bogatyr*s of the Russian epos—Sviatogor.⁵ Sviatogor possessed monstrous powers, but powers deprived of support; the land would not support him. In his great impiety, Sviatogor boasted that if only a ring could be made in the sky, heaven and earth might be inverted. But here the weakness of the strongest of the *bogatyr*s is revealed. Sviatogor is powerless to budge from its place a weathercock that was tilted effortlessly by Mikula the Plowman. Mikula the Plowman is the Russian people, whose strength is inseparable from the strength of the earth. The end of Sviatogor, his voluntary acceptance of the grave from which he no longer can arise, seems to be forecasting the ideological dead end created by the thought of the intelligentsia, as the result of its materialistic quest. The latter led it to "the final calculation" and except for the doctrine of suicide, revived from the time of Hegesias, nothing remains of the Russian feat. And just as Sviatogor, lying in his grave, expelled a "deathly breath" on those who approached him, Russian progressive thought

5. Sviatogor, among the elder heroes of the *byliny*, was one of the few who possessed supernatural powers. Depicted as a giant, his name suggests Holy Mountain. *Ed.*

for decades has smelled of spiritual death. This thought was expected to renew the world, but it could give birth only to a terrible miscarriage—revolution.

Revolution occurred when the people set off after the intelligentsia. For reasons completely independent of the latter, the people had to go somewhere, of course. In any case, a great popular movement was bound to take place as a result of the crisis in Russian life which was intensified by the war. But the path along which the people went was indicated to it by the intelligentsia. And, not only the Bolsheviks, but the entire intelligentsia which had prepared and inspired them, were responsible for the form taken by the revolution.

In a very short time, the people adopted the intelligentsia's idea. However, it adopted it in its own fashion, not abstractly, but concretely. In a few months it could not change its essence, learn to understand intellectually, and depart from its long-established psychological habits. It remained whole and effective in its means of understanding and of action, and what the intelligentsia dreamed, thought, spoke, and wrote about—the people implemented.

At the same time, one must admit that the people possessed an elevated idealism. Of course, selfish instincts were strong in the masses, and these prodded the people to betrayal, robbery, and ruin of the homeland. The people would not have betrayed Russia, had it not been for fear and fatigue at the front, and the enticements of land and enrichment at the rear. But the people would not have obeyed these dark feelings if, together and interwoven with them, a surge of ideals had not grown up in the people, if there had not been an ideal justification of these dark instincts. This justification was faith in some kind of new, instantaneous truth which the revolution brought with it. That was faith in a miracle, that same miracle which the intelligentsia contemptuously repudiated, and, there and then, presented to the people in another guise—by preaching the approach of universal revolution, the equalization of all peoples, etc. The main guilt of the intelligentsia was that through this preaching it sanctified base tendencies. For simple people, this paradise was the same as the fairy tale kingdom and promised lands of religious legend. And just like the zealots and pilgrims of old, the people was prepared to give everything for the sake of this kingdom. Foreign caricature, which portrayed the Russian people as blind and as having lost its common sense, as proceeding with eyes raised while from below it is threatened with bayonets, contains an image of real sublimity.

And the more guilty are those who truly betrayed the people, by having given false and senseless ideas as food for its magnificent upsurge. Guilty is the revolution; guilty is the intelligentsia's world view that created the revolution; guilty is the contemporary Western culture which created the intelligentsia's world view.

The fraud was revealed when two splintered parts of the Russian soul—the thinking soul and the acting soul—met and united. The people tested the in-

telligentsia. It judged, not as the intelligentsia had judged itself up to that time, answering theories with theories, and arguments with arguments. It took the intelligentsia at its word and judge it through actions.

The intelligentsia was, in the spiritual realm, what the old Cossacks had been in the realm of statehood. Freedom-loving people who did not tolerate the Muscovite yoke, they left for the steppe and there built a free life for themselves. The intelligentsia did the same in the spiritual realm. It could not bear the weight of the medieval world view. Like the prodigal son, not understanding the value and beauty of the family hearth, it did not value the national truth. Following the behest of the Russian pilgrims, it set off to wander over the wide world; it took its sorrow of sorrows to distant and foreign lands; it searched the distance for living waters. But it was deceived by the false mirage of European culture. Like the wayfarers of the Spanish fairy tale who mistook a hill of glittering, but cheap, quartz for Eldorado, for the mountain of gold, the intelligentsia mistook the heap of bad Western values for the only real truth of mankind. Of course, one cannot dispute the merits of European culture, particularly that part of it which borders on effective medieval Christian civilization—on science. Experimental science grew out of experimental magic, and is nothing other than realized white magic. But as for European culture itself, one must subject its entire speculative part to the most serious criticism: philosophy which advanced abstractions in place of the concrete; dead theory in place of creative action; and empty community and quantity in place of unity and quality.

And thus the intelligentsia returned to its people, not with living, but with dead water. It sprinkled the people with it, and the people destroyed Russia. But with that the people destroyed the intelligentsia as well. Like Samson, betrayed by Delilah, it brought down the arches of the temple on all who were present, including Delilah. Thus, the intelligentsia is no more. Its soul has been dissipated, it left with the smoke of burned cities, flowed away in unknown pools with the blood of martyrs.

In place of the intelligentsia, there remained those who survived the great drama, in whose souls the past idols had fallen, and a great transformation had taken place. The great meeting of Russian Thought and Russian Action could not pass in vain. It laid the foundations for a new world view, which few have yet to comprehend. And this is, above all, a return to the old truth of the Russian people.

Return, above all, means repentance. There cannot be a renewal of Russia without the repentance of both the people and the intelligentsia. But what does repentance mean? Repentance is the adoption of a new truth, its elevation above the old. The old divinity, which earlier ruled unconditionally, becomes a subordinate demiurge. With that, the old truth, which earlier stood above and beyond judgment, is judged in light of the new truth. But the nature of repentance is still more profound and enigmatic. Here, before our eyes, is

revealed one of the vital chasms, which penetrate the depths of everlasting being. Repentance makes sin of yesterday's truth, reveals in the new truth, not only the new, but the old. It is the renaissance of truth. The nature of repentance is resurrection, and not in vain are repentance and resurrection joined mysteriously in the wisdom of the greatest religion. Repentance draws out the future in the past, and the past bursts into the future. The secret of life, vainly sought by scholars and thinkers, sparkles in the depths which are revealed here. Jacob's ladder suddenly appears, and man, through his people and mankind, ascends by it to God Himself.

The repentance of the Russian people will be achieved by its return through the Russian future to the Russian past, or, by its resurrection through the past to the future, which is one and the same thing. By the light of the old truth, which indicates the future path, the Russian people will recognize its inner foulness, its sin of falsehood, cupidity, greed, and division.

IV

The ruin of the intelligentsia is the ruin of a world view constructed on thought alone. A synthesis of idea and action occurred in Russian reality. The idea wanted to direct the action, but the action destroyed the idea. The latter turned into smoke, into a dream. There remained only action, without the idea. In place of the intelligentsia, which subordinates the people to an ideal inculcated by reason, came the people, which subordinated the intelligentsia through its irrational action and scattered the intelligentsia's ideals through its concrete truth.

Is this not a horror? Is this not a re-establishment of barbarism, a return to the depths of the preconscious centuries of humanity, or even of that which preceded humanity? For those who lived only by the intellect, of course, it was. For those who, in fact, comprehended only the abstract scheme of life and placed this scheme at the basis of their activity, this was the ruin of all the bases of life, or rather of that which was taken for life. There was no ideal and there remained only dark emptiness.

But is it that way for the people? Is it that way for those who see themselves, not as separate from the people, but as working in it and with it? For them, the fall of the intelligentsia's dream is not the loss of possibilities, but, on the contrary, a liberation from something limiting and restricting. It is the demolition of the scaffolding which was erroneously taken for the structure itself, and which, having replaced the structure, prevented further construction. A scheme oppressed and reduced the inner essence of life, which asked to be let out. Subordinating themselves to a scheme, people lived artificial lives, and in essence life for them was not real life, but a game. The characteristic of a game is to limit our actions conditionally, not really, not wholly. And one may say that all actions inspired by the thought of the intelligentsia

were just such a game. It always seemed that the serious part is the contemplation, the mental deduction, that which takes place in the quiet of the study. Implementation is not serious, but secondary. It is not my affair, but someone else's. My concern is to devise, to explain, to connect a series of logical premises. The content of my thoughts is serious for those who will not only think them, but who so believe in them as to transform them into action. The whole basic frame of mind of the intelligentsia was just this way. We create theory; the people will realize it. Further perversion of the true relationship of reason to action led to their complete severance, to the placement of all responsibility, not on those who think, but on those who do. The first existed as if innocent beforehand, and liberated from the weight of consequences. The second bore the cross of all the evil that necessarily accompanies every action. This is what Dostoevskii, in his brilliant insight, portrayed in the figures of Ivan Karamazov who thought the death of his father, and Smerdiakov who committed the murder. The Russian people, who appeared before us in the form of Smerdiakov and committed the evil deed, has the right to say to the intelligentsia before the corpse of an expired Russia: "but you are the main murderer!"

I cannot help introducing two examples from my personal life, which depict the perverted mood of yesterday's Russian soul especially clearly. During the war, while participating in one reconnaissance, I fell into an ambush. I lay in a ditch under heavy Austrian fire. I experienced immense fear. But together with fear, I had a strange feeling of astonishment and offense against those who fired. How? At me? This must have been intended for others. After all, I only. . . . I only do the thinking. I felt the same thing on a military vessel, when it was hit. Again I was afraid. But along with that I wondered: am I really necessarily linked with this metal structure, with these people? Can I really be drowned, like the others? This appeared incongruous to me and simply stupid. Could this be real? After all, I only do the thinking. I felt what the English say in a game when someone is cheating: "If you please, the rules aren't being observed." I sought sensations, I wanted to experience. But, along with that, I wanted always to remain free in my desire, with the possibility at any moment of rejecting its consequences. And it was incomprehensible to me, that some outside force, completely exceeding the bounds of my desire, was threatening to foist its indisputable law on me. This led me out of the world of play, the world of thought, into some sort of world completely strange to me, of obligation and responsibility for my every action.

In both cases, moreover, I noticed that in the moment of greatest danger many of those with me sensed nothing of the kind. Particularly those in danger by obligation, those who performed some kind of work, lacked that bifurcation. I noticed that they did not separate themselves from what was happening, that they were part of the whole, and even felt that by their actions they could influence its course, alter its power. The soldiers, lying in the ditch,

answered the fire—that is, tried to paralyze the danger by their actions. The sailors lowered the lifeboats, axed the ropes, rowed and bailed water.

I cited these incidents because I think the collision of two world views, the intellectual and the active, stands out clearly in them. That which I experienced in war, as a chance and non-military observer, the whole Russian intelligentsia experienced in the revolution when, as a consequence of the natural movement of the people, its intellectual game was transformed into reality. “If you please,” cried the theoreticians and the thinkers, when the workers, peasants, and soldiers began to implement what had been taught them. “You know, we only did the thinking! You are not sticking to the rules, and you are drawing us into totally unforeseen consequences.”

The entire behavior of the intelligentsia was guided by that same belief in the non-obligatory and irresponsible character of its own thoughts. Reared in a realm of abstractions, where there is no practical counteraction by reality and the constant, corrective factor of life, they created a world which had nothing in common with the Russian world. And when the real Russian world they had abandoned to arbitrary fate collapsed on them, they arrived at a state of fear and confusion.

Today in place of the prattle of these weak people, we hear the awakening “roar of the tribe.” The Russia which thought, proved to be worthless. There remained only the whole which acts. From its precious depths, it reconstructs a new cultural Russia. And the latter, instead of realizing itself in the abstract moment, juxtaposed to the external process of reality, realizes itself in the concrete moment, joined with this general process and immanent in it.

As contemporaries, it is difficult for us to say what the Russian world view of the future will be. But, in any case, its foundations are already clear. They are being laid by the epoch in which we live, by that accomplishment taking place around us and in ourselves. We cannot separate what has been united in our life. And however much we would like to be mere observers and theorizing philosophers, we are forced, first of all, to be doers, apostles, and prophets.

That is why history and sociology, two inseparable parts of one and the same science, and *sobornost*, acquire primary significance for us. History gives us concrete material for our action, and describes the elements subject to it. Sociology gives us the rules, not abstract, but concrete, of this action. These rules are not even recognized by us as rules, but they are sensed as forces, as indisputable requirements, offering testament of the past which prods us to determined accomplishments of the future. In connection with this, our cognition proceeds, not from the general moment, timeless and objective, as the idealists would have it, and not from the abstract moment, isolated from objective reality—the “logical situation” of the pragmatists—but from “this” moment, which is present-day and concrete, and includes both time and timelessness, equally.

Finally, we must recognize our indissoluble link with history and with the

people, which creates history. What we experience and what we express, is that which over the ages the Russian people experiences and expresses. We are its messengers and heralds. Through us, it creates its cause, and our creation is its past and future creation. And the greatest error would be for us to listen to the people superficially, to know and to contemplate it superficially. We sense it from within. We exist in its flow. We travel within its raging element that comes from the depths of the ages. In a dark room, with locked shutters, we attempted to escape from brutal and stinking life into the pure expanses of thought. But life burst into our fortress, crumpled and smashed the sound-proof Kantian box. The soul, which was perishing in its deserted isolation, heard in itself the saving roar of the tribe. Thirsting, it found the life-creating spring of history in its waterless desert. Henceforth, the creators of the new Russian reality will draw from its powerful waters, from the underground force accumulated in the depths of the native soil.

An inner understanding of kinship and *sobornost'* is important for what has taken place in Russia, and what is taking place in the world. The world from time immemorial has been held together by kinship and *sobornost'*. *Sobornost'* is the higher quality of the herd—the herd, not as a mechanical, but as an organic unification of people. At the basis of this unification lies kinship—the recognition of a single root, which ties together seemingly separate actions.

Medieval culture in the Church was saturated with the spirit of *sobornost'*, in private life it was saturated with the spirit of kinship. It makes no difference whether the latter was expressed in respect for grandfathers and great-grandfathers and for established customs, as in Russia, or in elucidation of the differences created by quality and inheritance, as in the West. The link with the past was equally vital, both here and there, regardless of the various forms it took. And the most monstrous offspring of what is called contemporary culture is precisely its flatness, its denial of time, kin, and tribe. Kinlessness cannot be realized as an implementable principle, and herein lies a censure of all currents of thought tainted by it. It is really the mark of Antichrist, and everywhere, in all the ideas and in all the constructions that bear it—one may say, without error: "This is the kingdom, not of life, but of death." This is frozen ice, whose lifeless beauty is taken for the beauty of life. This is deathly superficiality, displayed like an ideological banner, which condemns beforehand all who follow after it to the most terrible end—to dehydration, in fatal isolation from all vital sources.

Our revolution was the kingdom of such inner intimacy, of such similarity of moods and attractions. Its foolishness and ignorance evolved on this ground. And those who sought something else in it, were like people lost in a fog. Nothing is visible all around, except the narrow, uniform haze. One senses that there is an expanse somewhere beyond it. One more step and a living, radiant abyss will open up before ones eyes. There is life, there is salvation, there is awakening. But tired eyes stare in vain into the grey shroud of the surrounding

fog. It stands motionless, full of ominous ghastliness, and it seems its depth ceases to be a depth, it closes in on man, it loses its three dimensions, and, as in a terrible dream, it becomes a suffocating murdering flatness.

This is the kingdom of corpses, buried without a funeral service, who crawl out of the graves—corpses, blind, deaf, and with rotting brains. They despise life and would like to infect it with their cadaverous poison. They despise equally the greatness that lives and the greatness that has died, for they come from beyond, and they know that there is no death, and that the dead are frequently more powerful than the living.

This is not death. It is a repulsive likeness of life, an external whole, no longer internally whole; it is parts artificially bound together and attempting to decompose, to crawl apart. Imposture, the false name—is the nature of death. The corpse is a blasphemous imitation of man.

The manifested kingdom of intellectualism is the kingdom of imposture, for in it a false, outward appearance, which calls itself true life, triumphs, an idea which masks the fatal emptiness. This is, truly, the kingdom of Antichrist, of the Son of Perdition, which has replaced the radiant Kingdom of the Logos.

We have been seized by this falsehood. We will not get away from it so long as we do not go beyond the narrow circle of contemporary conflicts. It is necessary to return back to deep deposits which from time immemorial have enriched Russian consciousness. It is necessary to reveal the Russian past anew. There, in the harsh concentration of a single people's thought, a powerful and fertile culture was born. It was renounced for the glimmer of foreign tinsel, by that restless wanderer, our Sophia the Wise, the intelligentsia. But, from the passionate torments of recognized sin, the saving Aeon is born.⁶ Sophia returns, repentant, to the fatherly bosom. In the depository of the Russian spirit, she acquires once again the rejected wisdom.

Soon the Russian people will stand before the world in great unity and wholeness. Against the Russia of robbery, coercion, and unruliness—there arises, as a terrible host, the Russia of self-sacrifice, severity and spiritual exploit. Against an impious Rus', a plundering Rus'—there arises a knightly Rus'.

A knightly Rus'—this is the reborn, new, Russian intelligentsia. Through it, the people's corn field will begin to form ears after the spring storm. The terrible whirlwind, which rushed through the thicket of the people's soul, toppled the rotten trees in it and cleared space for young offshoots, the best children of the *sobor* forest. They stretch upward, into the expanse of the universe, but their strength is in a healthy root which is nourished by historical soil. Thus the link of personal thought with universal thought will form through the thought of kin and people.

6. In Gnosticism, the term Aeon referred to an order of spirits that emanated from the Godhead. Some Gnostic Christians applied the term to Christ, who came to save the world from the error embodied in the material universe. *Ed.*

May the bearers of this new Russian thought, at once national and universal, be leaders and prophets. May their feat be a feat of true spiritual design and effective creativity. And, in completing it, let them not fear the superhuman roar, the roar of the tribe, which raised them up. If they will be frightened by the force of the stream that moves them, like a man who suddenly sees in himself Leviathan or Rakhaba,⁷ let them recall: "He threatened them, and they ran away and were driven like chaff by the wind on the mountain and dust in the storm." (Isaiah 17:13). But there can be no other life, once man has recognized himself as the people, and has extended his weakest members, mortal in the present, immortally into the timeless temporality of the ages.

Moscow

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7. Leviathan or Rekhaba was the dragon of chaos in the myth of creation. *Ed.*

*On the Paths and Tasks of
the Russian Intelligentsia*

I

In 1909, a symposium of essays on the Russian intelligentsia appeared under the title *Signposts*. The participants in this symposium wrote their essays, as they said in the introduction to the symposium, not with arrogant contempt for the past of the Russian intelligentsia, but "with anguish for this past and with burning anxiety for the future of the native land." They wanted to call upon the Russian intelligentsia to reconsider those previously held beliefs, which led it to great disappointment in 1905, and which they anticipated would necessarily lead to still more painful disappointment in the future. Themselves prominent representatives of the Russian intelligentsia, they did not set up the goal of deflecting the intelligentsia from its distinctive task of consciously organizing life. They called upon it neither to reject work of creative consciousness, nor to deny faith in its vital calling. They only wanted to show that the path along which the mainstream of the intelligentsia had previously travelled was an incorrect and ruinous path, and that there was another possible and necessary path for it, one to which it had long been summoned by its greatest representatives, Chaadaev, Dostoevskii, and Vladimir Solov'ev. If, instead, it chose Bakunin and Chernyshevskii, Lavrov and Mikhailovskii as its leaders, that was a great misfortune, both for the intelligentsia itself and for our nation, because this is a path of defection, of dissociation from the positive sources of life. The Russian intelligentsia must assume the task of breaking with this tradition that leads to the abyss and to collapse, and of returning to the objective bases of history. The two paths which open before it are as different from each other as the paths of life and death. A choice must be made, Russia's fate depends on it. Such were the conclusions of the symposium *Signposts*.

How did the Russian intelligentsia answer these prophetic appeals? Unfortunately, one must admit that its answer was a unanimous condemnation of the cluster of thoughts proposed in *Signposts*. The intelligentsia has nothing to reconsider, and nothing to change—such was the general tone of the criticism. It must continue its work, relinquishing nothing and keeping its goal firmly in view. All agreed that the general tendency of *Signposts* was a product of reaction, and the result of dejection and weariness. But perhaps nowhere was the general view of *Signposts* expressed with such distinct clarity as in one of the essays of Professor Vipper, who, one must admit, is a subtle critic. Seeking

examples in the past, as historians do, Professor Vipper finds an absolute counterpart to the schism within our intelligentsia in ancient Greece. "The two types of intelligentsia mentioned by contemporary evaluators already existed there 2,400 years before our time: one type which ignites the torch of knowledge for all, and gives its powers to the cause of the countless masses of life's obscure workers; and the other type which conceals its beam of light only for itself, only for self-improvement, and only for the elaboration of the inner treasures of its soul. Every time this succession of two intelligentsias is repeated in the history of cultured society, there is a repetition of the same phenomenon we have recently lived through ourselves. The intelligentsia of the second type which appears on the scene after the utter defeat of the first, . . . undertakes to curse its predecessors, to mock them, and to characterize their cause as godless and destructive." And as a practical conclusion, Professor Vipper repeated what was said by so many at that time: "Our great country is profoundly unfortunate in many ways, but it has one thing that gives a strong and healthy promise of a way out and liberation—this is the thought and impulse of its intelligentsia."¹

We will not speak of the correctness of this description of two types of intelligentsia in relation to ancient Greece, nor how well the figures of Socrates and Plato fit into the framework given by Professor Vipper. Here we are interested in something else: in what way the "burning anxiety for the future of the native land," which guided the contributors to *Signposts*, may be taken as a desire "to conceal its beam of light only for itself, only for self-improvement." And how it could happen, that after those powerful and severe blows that were struck by *Signposts* to the overconfidence of the intelligentsia's consciousness, Professor Vipper can still affirm that, in our great and unfortunate land, only the thought and impulse of our intelligentsia appears strong and healthy.

Thinking over these questions, I must say that in the present situation we have an obvious case of misunderstanding, and not only on the part of Professor Vipper, at that. Through some of their disagreements, even the contributors to *Signposts* were to blame for the fact that their points of view were interpreted so erroneously that they, the most flaming patriots, were counted among the adherents to a doctrine of personal self-improvement. One need only read through the essay of P. B. Struve, to realize that his most passionate desire is to find new political paths, and to discover more just and stable methods for building society. But glancing through the essay of Mr. Gershenzon, we must admit that Professor Vipper had some grounds for his conclusion, and that in this essay one really can find reason to protest against the psy-

1. Prof. R. Iu. Vipper, *Dve intelligentsii i drugie ocherki* (Two Intelligentsias and Other Essays) (Moscow: Kushnerev, 1912), pp. 24-25.

chology of individualism that results from alarmingly isolated moral or aesthetic feelings. And when that same Mr. Gershenzon, in the introduction to *Signposts* spoke about "the primacy of spiritual life over the external forms of communal life," and when he claimed that the general conviction of the authors of *Signposts* was "the inner life of the individual is the only creative force of human existence, and that it, and not the self-sufficient principles of political order, appeared as the only firm basis for any building of society," this was more than misunderstanding. No doubt these few words also include a significant dose of that very dissociation and alienation from the state which P. B. Struve judged in *Signposts* to be the basic sin of the Russian intelligentsia. To juxtapose individual spiritual life to external forms of communal life and self-sufficient principles of political order, is to repeat, from the opposite direction, the same error made by those who preach the omnipotence of political forms. Self-sufficient principles of political order do not exist in reality; they may be thought of only in abstraction. And those who speak about them, whether to extol their significance or whether to oppose to them the individual inner life as the only firm basis, appear equally in error, because they sin equally against the elementary truth of the science of government—that social forms of life comprise only part of the spiritual life of the individual, its symbol and its result.

But the statements expressed by several of the contributors to *Signposts* contained other misunderstandings which unwittingly evoked justified response and reprimand. In *Signposts*, constant reference is made to the sins and errors of the *Russian* intelligentsia, and, in the characterization of its paths and aspirations, the contributors to the symposium reveal great critical insight. However, they do not pose the one natural and inescapable question: was the Russian intelligentsia alone guilty of departure from the correct path? Is not the collapse of its ideals but a particular example of a general crisis in the consciousness of the intelligentsia, which at all times and places, under similar circumstances, leads to the same result and ends with the same failure of its hopes and desires? By a notable coincidence, five years after the Russian *Signposts* appeared, a French book in the style of *Signposts* appeared in France. I have in mind the book of Edouard Berth, *Les méfaits des intellectuels*, with an extensive introduction by Georges Sorel (1914). Just as in our *Signposts*, here too the authors were former, prominent representatives of socialism, who had lived through all the enthusiasms of the intelligentsia's consciousness themselves, and who had recognized all of its vanity and inadequacy. The demand of Sorel to turn from Descartes to Pascal, corresponding exactly to the slogans of Struve and Bulgakov, also marks two channels in the consciousness of French thought—one proceeding from a rationalist root, the other from a mystical one. As in the Russian *Signposts*, so too in the French, the rationalistic current in the intelligentsia's consciousness was sharply condemned, and a completely different spiritual direction, with new initial points of view, was recommended.

But, if such faults and fractures in the consciousness of the intelligentsia appear as general and not exclusively Russian phenomena, then is it not possible to find some broader definition for that tendency of the intelligentsia's thought which, in general, always leads it to collapse? And is it not possible to indicate more exact demarcations between different tendencies within the intelligentsia? If we do not answer these questions, we risk lowering our discussion into journalism, by tying it to current difficulties and disappointments, instead of elevating it to some general philosophical foundation. We risk also losing the leading thread which helps us to know just which intelligentsia we censure, and for what reason we censure it. The contributors to *Signposts*, tracing their genealogy from Chaadaev, Dostoevskii, and Vladimir Solov'ev, may just as legitimately be viewed as representatives of one tendency of the Russian intelligentsia, as their opponents, connecting themselves in a common tradition with Bakunin and Chernyshevskii, Lavrov and Mikhailovskii, consider themselves representatives of another tendency. Where is the dividing line? And precisely which path of the intelligentsia's consciousness must be recognized as incorrect and fatal?

II

The essay of P. B. Struve, it seems to me, indicates very precisely the fundamental uniqueness of the intelligentsia's consciousness which is the reason for its collapse. This uniqueness consists of an irreligious dissociation from the state. To express this thought in the customary formulas of philosophical language, we would have to say that the fundamental manifestation of the intelligentsia's consciousness that led to its collapse is rationalistic utopianism, an attempt to construct life according to reason, tearing it away from the objective principles of history, from the organic foundation of the social order, and from the life-giving sacred objects of national life. If the loftiest foundation and sacred object of life is religion, that is, the link of man with God, and the link of individual consciousness with the objective and universal law of good, as with the law of God, then rationalistic utopianism is a denial of this link. It is a falling away or a dissociation of human reason from divine reason. And in this sense, the crisis of the intelligentsia's consciousness is, not only a Russian, but a universal historical phenomenon. Insofar as human reason, carried away with the strength of its own impulse, arrives at an overconfident notion that it can transform life in its own fashion, and with the power of human thought bring life to absolute perfection, it falls into utopianism, irreligious dissociation, and self-exaltation. The movement of consciousness which criticizes the old structures, and which questions the truth of the existing establishment, is a necessary manifestation of thought and a great guarantee of progress. In the history of human development, it represents a dynamic factor, leading consciousness to newer and higher purposes. The sig-

nificance of critical thought in this respect is great and indisputable. But when human thought, carried away by its own flight, tears away from its vital roots, when it strives to reconstruct all reality of and by itself, replacing reality's organic laws with its own abstract demands, then instead of being a creative and progressive force, it becomes the source of destruction and revolution. Then the Evangelist's words about salt that has lost its flavor rings true: "You are the salt of the earth; but if salt has lost its flavor, then how can its saltiness be restored? It has no value, but to be thrown away, for people to trample underfoot."²

When Socrates and Plato attacked the Sophists for their godless and destructive deeds, they had in mind precisely this falling away of human reason from its eternal and universal foundation. They were proponents of critical thought themselves, and they too subjected existing reality to their judgment. But they made this judgment conscious of a higher divine order that ruled in the world, uniting "heaven and earth, people and the gods." In contrast to this, the enlightening activity of the Sophists represents a classic example of utopian consciousness, which strives to construct both philosophy and life on principles of rationalistic subjectivism. In the realm of philosophy, these attempts lead to the relativism and skepticism that constitute the crisis of philosophical consciousness. In the realm of social life, they lead to dissociation and self-exaltation, to a separation of individual consciousness from the objective principles of history, which involves a crisis of the community. The Sophists affirmed that law and the state do not exist naturally, but are established by humans, and, therefore, the entire social order is a matter of human artifice. A strong man may cut all social ties, reject all the magic and rituals by which he is sustained in the general structure, and create for himself his own justice. Thus, individual human reason declares itself all powerful and self-satisfied, and bows to no powers higher than itself. The collapse of the Sophists is one of the clearest examples of the crisis of such self-exaltation by the intelligentsia, while the struggle with the Sophists by Socrates and Plato is the greatest example of the revolt of religious-philosophical consciousness against the utopianism of the intelligentsia. It is not surprising that the positivist and rationalist thought of our own time, while extolling the enlightening activity of the Sophists, tries to present Socrates and Plato in the guise of reactionaries. One may point, for example, to the portrayal of the Socratic school in Beloch's *History of Greece*.³ For those who see progress in the creation of the new and the tearing away from the old, in destructive rationalistic criticism, and in attempts to reconstruct life totally, then, of course, the reforming teaching of the Socratic school is merely reaction. But there is an alternate understanding

2. Matthew 5,13. *Ed.*

3. Julius Beloch, *Griechische Geschichte*, 3 vols. in 4 (Strassburg: K. J. Trubner, 1893-1904). *Ed.*

of progress, based on an attempt to preserve the link between the centuries and the generations. According to this view, progressive movement must join the old and the new, the reverential respect for the sanctity of history with the creation of new life. And in light of this definition of progress, Socrates and Plato are the bearers of that higher progressive consciousness, making them the eternal teachers of mankind. In the span of 2,400 years, the spiritual experience of mankind, has decided the argument between the Sophists and the Socratic school in favor of the latter. The pathos of eternity, and humility before the lofty, objective bonds of life—these spiritual strivings which comprise the vital roots of Socratic philosophy—assured this philosophy significance as an eternally fresh source of philosophical knowledge. Meanwhile, the “daring self-delusion” of the Sophists’ subjectivism remains only an example of the collapse of rationalistic thought, which tried to explain and construct everything out of itself.

III

But if the general definitions we have just given are correct, then obviously the ideological sources of the utopian consciousness of the Russian intelligentsia lie beyond the limits of Russian reality. It is not difficult to find those sources; they undoubtedly stem from those socialist and anarchist teachings that represent the clearest example of rationalistic utopianism and irreligious dissociation in nineteenth-century European thought. In turn, the utopian teachings of socialism and anarchism also have their prototypes in the utopianism of eighteenth-century French revolutionary doctrine, with its faith in the omnipotence of institutions, the marvelous power of human reason, and the imminence of earthly paradise. From there, it is possible to trace a long chain of ideas in succession to the still older teachings of rationalism⁴ and utopianism. That other current of the Russian intelligentsia, which traces its genealogy from Chaadaev, Dostoevskii, and Vladimir Solov’ev, has equally ancient roots. It would not be difficult to find its prototypes in old Russian literature, and, no doubt, in the search for its origins we would arrive at the Christian religion and Greek philosophy. The greatest misfortune of the Russian people lies in the fact that the latter tendency of the Russian intelligentsia, which is joined with deep roots to the whole course of Russian history, was never prominent with us; while the tendency of thought in the intelligentsia that was dominant turned out to be one that unavoidably led it to collapse. The misfortune con-

4. Both the 1918 and the 1967⁴ Russian editions have the word “nationalism” for “rationalism” here, but that word makes no sense in the context. In Russian, as in English, the difference between the two words is only the initial letter. Thus, I have taken “nationalism” to have been a misprint in the original edition, copied in the second. *Ed.*

sists in the fact that the venom of socialist and anarchist teachings poisoned not only the socialist and *narodnik* consciousness, in the strict sense of the word, but that it penetrated deeply into the entire world view of Russian enlightened society. How often even those who stood apart from the socialist and *narodnik* parties nevertheless found it possible, in their views and their tactics, to preserve some kind of link between their views and socialism, *narodnichestvo*, and sometimes even with anarchism. How insistently they expressed a desire to maintain a union and friendship with the so-called left-wing tendencies of the intelligentsia's thought. "You know I also am a little bit socialistic." "For the future, naturally, I recognize socialism." "As an ideal I allow anarchism"—these thoughts, and others like them, circulating in the intelligentsia reveal with full clarity that our non-socialist intelligentsia had no clear conception of either anarchism or socialism. There was no conception of the fact that these teachings want to construct life "on nothing," to use the language of Stirner,⁵ that they perform their construction apart from the foundations of culture, on that pinnacle of abstract rationalism where all organic ties of life are denied and where all the roots of history are undermined. Socialism and anarchism, in their pure and unmodified expressions, are atheistic, cosmopolitan, and stateless, and in this sense they can construct nothing without denying their own essence. Their basic striving can only be destructive.

West European liberal thought, forged by long experience in responsible civic activity, found sufficient strength and breadth within itself to overcome socialism, to separate the moral premises of socialism from the poisonous consequences of revolutionary utopianism, and to include those premises in its own teachings about state systems and freedom. In Russia, non-socialist thought could not achieve this degree of maturity; it wandered in darkness and in confusion was drawn to socialism, not realizing that the moral basis of socialism—respect for the human personality—is a liberal principle, not a socialist one, and that in socialist teachings this principle is not developed, but overshadowed.⁶

Along with the venom of socialism, the Russian intelligentsia in full measure also absorbed the poison of *narodnichestvo*. Referring to this poison, I mean the peculiar *narodnik* faith that the people are always prepared, mature, and perfect; and that one need only destroy the old state structure and immediately it will become possible for the people to realize the most profound reforms and the most grandiose work of social construction. The first apostle

5. The reference is to Max Stirner, pseud. of Kaspar Schmidt (1806-56) whose work, *Der Einziger und sein Eigentum* (The Ego and its Own) in 1845, recognized no higher standard or law above the individual ego. *Ed.*

6. I substantiate my views on socialism and anarchism in detail in my study, *On the Social Ideal*. [These articles appearing in *Voprosy filosofii i psikhologii* (Questions of Philosophy and Psychology) from 1911 to 1918 were later collected in P. I. Novgorodtsev, *Ob obshchestvennom ideale* (On the Social Ideal) (Berlin: "Slovo," 1921). *Ed.*]

of this faith was Bakunin, with his teaching about the creative power of destruction. Not recognizing the anarchist roots of this faith, the thought of the Russian intelligentsia set up the principled struggle with authority and the destruction of the existing state order as its basic political tasks. When, as a result of this struggle, the old order would fall, everything would be accomplished by itself. The twofold experience of the Russian revolution showed that this *narodnik* faith was the purest anarchist illusion, completely false theoretically and lethal practically.

Of course, one can explain how and why the Russian intelligentsia was the way it was, under the old conditions of life. It is even possible to prove that it could not have been otherwise. While granting the possibility and utility of such historical explanations, I do not pose them as my task in this case. My goal is to show the logical connection of ideas. Let us grant that the dominant tendency of our enlightened society was the objectively unavoidable misfortune of Russian life. But if this was so, we must explain with all candor and directness, not only the causes of this misfortune, but also its consequences. In regard to its influence on the development of Russian state structure, it is important to admit that the dissociation of the Russian intelligentsia from the state had fatal consequences. And for Russian social thought, it is no less important to explain this side of the matter, with its significance for the future, than to seek explanations of the past. It is important in order to affirm the belief that dissociation from the state—that spiritual fruit of socialist and anarchist influences—must be uprooted from the general consciousness, and that this act is a necessary guarantee for the rebirth of Russia.

IV

I spoke initially of the unanimous chorus of rejection with which *Signposts* was greeted in Russian society. This is explained by the fact that the participants in *Signposts* brought with them a principle which broke sharply with the socialist, anarchist, and *narodnik* beliefs of the Russian intelligentsia. The attempt to implement these beliefs, in 1905, had been cut short by state action from above, and those who were sustained by utopian illusions retired from the scene with the conviction that their strivings were correct in essence, and were not realized only because of the external coercion of the authorities. The overriding majority of Russian society took this view. Only a few, among them the participants in *Signposts*, foresaw even at that time that no good could come from the poisonous seeds of utopianism, and that they would bring destruction and death in their train. The great troubles of our day have shown how right these few were, and how wrong were those who expected the Russian revolution to be a triumph and good fortune for the Russian people. Not only was our state structure destroyed, but the nation itself collapsed. The revolutionary whirlwind dispersed and scattered the entire people to the

side, cutting it into hostile and isolated parts. Our homeland is exhausted from internal feuds. An unheard of disorder of life threatens, with the most terrible and most destructive consequences. The usurpations and victories of the enemy meet almost no resistance, and it appears that all may do with Russia what they wish. Only the blackest days of our past history can compare with what we are living through now.

In these conditions of general torment and anguish, even the blind can see. Now everyone is beginning to say what the few affirmed ten years ago. All the more often, doubt is heard as to whether we have chosen the right path; and now no question is more burning than the question about the fates of our intelligentsia. The spontaneous course of history has already cast it to the side. From a predominant position, it has become secondary; and it stands before its future and the future of its country in weighty meditation. Those who did not see this earlier repeat all the more persistently that the misfortune of the intelligentsia was that it has been out of touch with the people and with the people's real work and real needs. It lived in abstractions, created artificial theories, and its very understanding of the people was artificial and abstract. Submerged in its theoretical dreams and disagreements, the intelligentsia lived in its own hermitage, and, when the time came to act, it placed responsibility to its hermitage and to its theories and dogma above its responsibilities to the state and to the country's national tasks. As a consequence, the state was destroyed and the hermitage did not survive.

In these judgments, which I have heard from outstanding representatives of the socialist intelligentsia, we come rather close to P. B. Struve's old formulation about the intelligentsia's dissociation from the state. There remains only one step to take to come close to the philosophy of *Signposts*. All the judgments one hears nowadays about the intelligentsia discuss the disastrous consequences of its separation from the people and the necessity of its coming together with the people. In connection with this, the organic defects of the intelligentsia's consciousness, as it has been severed from general national life, are readily admitted: a conceit from principle; a striving to make humanity happy with contrived systems; an excess of abstract criticism; a futility of schemes and solutions, and a "seething in idle action."⁷ A coming together with the people in its work, its needs, and its life is recognized as a natural way out of these misfortunes of abstract thought. To remove the exclusiveness and aloofness of the intelligentsia, to involve it directly in a practical cause—this is the real solution to the question about the fate of the intelligentsia. Many talk this way now; but it is obvious that this solution is purely

7. Some of the most interesting attempts to investigate the particularities of the intelligentsia's consciousness are the articles by Professor Vipper in *Utro Rossii* (Morning of Russia), under the title "Sol zemli" (Salt of the Earth).

formal and therefore entirely inadequate. The question is posed here as if the whole problem had a purely mechanical character. A mechanical rift must be healed with a mechanical coming together, and it all comes down to the intelligentsia and the people being together and not apart. Meanwhile, the real question is: what is the nature of that cause in which the people and the intelligentsia should unite? When, as in our time, the very understanding of a common cause that holds people together is lost, when the destructive force of egotistical strivings split the national organism into parts, and its vital spirit suffocates, it becomes obvious that we face no external, mechanical break-up, but a deep spiritual crisis. The whole problem is to understand and define the essence of this crisis correctly. Then the way out of it will also be defined, in true accordance with the depth of the mortal danger we have experienced.

V

When, after the Time of Troubles, at the beginning of the seventeenth century, Trubetskoi and Pozharskii sent instructions to all localities with the request that "the best, sensible, and constant people, who would represent you in all matters," be sent to a *sobor* "to speak freely and fearlessly about the state cause," they summoned these people to Moscow "for the great cause of God and country." The rebuilding of the state in their native land seemed to them to be a great cause of God, and they looked upon the act of choosing a sovereign, for which the *sobor* was called, as the necessary organic foundation of state building. "And we give you to know, and you know this already, that soon we in the Muscovite state will be without a sovereign, and that it is impossible for us to exist without a sovereign. Surely in no state can a government stand without a sovereign."⁸ This is a clear and simple expression of that view which understands the cause of the state to be the cause of God, and which seeks to firm up the state on the strong foundations of historical experience. Completely foreign to this view, is the idea that the state cause has no relationship to the spiritual life of the individual. Even more strange to it is the striving to construct everything anew, to make that which "in no state" has ever existed. Expressed here is a reverential honoring of the affairs of God and human experience, a bowing down before the highest organic laws of life and before the objective principles of history.

Were we to apply this point of view to the questions of our time, it would

8. *Novye akty Smutnogo vremeni* (New Acts of the Time of Troubles), collected by S. B. Veselovskii, No. 82 (Moscow, 1911). [I have not been able to verify this reference. Novgorodtsev may be referring to some part of S. B. Veselovskii, *Smutoe vremia Moskovskogo gosudarstva, 1604-1613* gg. (The Time of Troubles of the Moscow State, 1604-1613), 9 vols. (Moscow: Obshchestvo istorii i drevnostei rossiiskikh, 1910-18). Ed.]

follow that both the people and the intelligentsia must unite in the service of some common cause that stands above both the people's desires and the intelligentsia's theories. The destruction of national life in accordance with the abstract demands of the intelligentsia's utopias, and the elevation of popular desires to the level of the highest ideals of state building are equally contradictory to such service. The work of enlightened consciousness is essential, but it must be accomplished with regard to the objective and universal foundations of social organization. Concern for the people is obligatory and holy, but only on the condition that it does not create an idol out of the people, and that it joins this concern with the cause of God, which must be served equally by the people and by the intelligentsia. Only in that case will the progressive thought of the intelligentsia acquire its true and sound content, and will national life be consolidated on the solid foundation of organic construction. It is this path of joining the old with the new, and the changeable with the constant and the eternal, that the English liberal author Burke wrote so well about: ["Preservation of the old with constant changes is the general law of] any permanent body composed of transitory parts . . . [In this way] the whole . . . is never old, or middle-aged, or young, but in a condition of unchanging constancy, moves on through the varied tenor of perpetual decay, fall, renovation, and progression. Thus, by preserving the method of nature in the conduct of the state, in what we improve, we are never wholly new; in what we retain we are never wholly obsolete. . . . Always acting as if in the presence of canonized forefathers, the spirit of freedom, leading in itself to misrule and excess, is tempered with an awful gravity. This idea of a liberal descent inspires us with a sense of habitual native dignity, which prevents that upstart insolence almost inevitably adhering to and disgracing those who are the first acquirers of any distinction."⁹

Every people that forms itself into a spiritual whole, having its history, its culture, and its calling, contains within itself a living force that unites its separate members together into a single whole, that makes a live organism out of these atoms and this human dust by breathing into it a single spirit. This is that great force of spiritual cohesion which forms around the sacred objects of the nation; this is the force of that divine cause which the people manifests in its history. These sacred objects are religious, state, and national, not in the sense of being universally required dogmas and unvarying forms, outside of which all who belong to a given state or nation are swept aside and suppressed,

9. Novgorodtsev added a few words to his quotations from Burke to make coherent sentences. I have put these in brackets. Otherwise he quotes intermittently, but accurately. To avoid the embarrassment of seeing what happens to Burkean prose when translated into Russian and back again into English, I have used Burke's original words. See Edmund Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (London: J. M. Dent, 1910), pp. 31-33. *Ed.*

but in the general sense of guiding objective principles, before which individual consciousness bows, acknowledging them as something superior to itself. Within the boundaries of a given state, different faiths may get on with each other, different political points of view may contend, and a number of different nationalities and languages may exist. But for a state to present itself as a stable spiritual unity, it must become firmly grounded on a general respect and general love for the possession common to all its people; and it must harbor in its depths a reverence for its cause, as the cause of God. Even nonbelievers, in their own way, may share this reverence, this cult of their homeland, insofar as they recognize service to it as a worthy and true cause, and insofar as they are ready to make all sacrifices in defense of this cause, even the sacrifice of their own lives and the lives of those close to them. This also means that, in the name of the higher ideal ties before which they selflessly and reverently bow, they will tear the root of egoism completely from their hearts. The state cannot force everyone into a uniform cult, and the citizens' filial affection for the state, both as their fatherland and as the cause of their fathers, cannot take the form of the slavish obedience of one group before another ruling and exalted group. True patriotism is based firmly on the equal respect by all parts of the people for the notion of the state as the cause of God. It presupposes a motherland that knows no distinction between sons and stepsons; it presupposes a fatherland, or family, in which all people are brothers, who do not distinguish among themselves according to artificial markings, but according to natural gifts and personal merits.

Getting on together in the harmonious union of a civil unity, separate nationalities and groups, each in its own way, may reverently honor its native land, and raise prayers to God for its divine preservation. But if no nationality raises its prayers about the state, if no one believes any longer in the state, does not love and does not honor it, that state cannot exist. Without these things, to use the words of the old instructions, "in no state can a government stand." And now, when the revolutionary whirlwind has scattered and cast Russian power to the side, and when it has delivered Russia into foreign hands, only an awakening of religious consciousness and nation-state feeling can regenerate Russia. Old Russia—need it be said?—was unable to carry the Russian idea of statehood to that height which represents the joining of ideas of equality and freedom to firm nation-state and religious principles. The formula of old Russian statehood—"autocracy, orthodoxy, and nationality"—gave a dogmatic and exclusive character to these necessary principles of state life. But what did the Russian intelligentsia do, with the lively and undeniable influence of its broad overflowing of social consciousness, to facilitate the adoption of more comprehensible formulas? We may list a small set of names—and among them especially the name of Vladimir Solov'ev—who deserve credit for zealous work in this direction. As for the prevailing currents of Russian social consciousness—they played the sad role of a destructive force that, in conflict

with the dogmatism of the old principles, rejected also the thoroughly concrete and real principles of history, replacing them with the abstract emptiness of the principles of statelessness, irreligion, and internationalism. And when it was granted the freedom to act and to rule, it led Russia to the brink of destruction. A task of great, vital importance arises for the Russian state consciousness of our day: to realize and affirm the necessary principles of state life in the direct interaction of authority and the people. It would be the greatest misfortune for Russia, if that new national authority which the country expects did not find sufficient creative strength within itself to enter on a new path of state construction. But it would be an even more serious and completely irreparable misfortune if our intelligentsia, once again, decided that there was nothing for it to reconsider and nothing to change. For the intellectual principles of statehood are only worked out in the spiritual experience of the enlightened parts of society. And if Russian enlightened society has once again become a prisoner of socialist, *narodnik*, and anarchist beliefs, and has once again found itself in the position of a force hostile to authority on principle, then on whom might authority lean in its progressive strivings? In that case, we would again appear to be in that vicious circle which we could not get out of earlier: the narrow understanding of statehood from above; the full denial of statehood from below. The task of our time is to break this vicious circle, and, through the harmonious action of both authority and the people, to resurrect and elevate the weakened forces of the Russian land. But for this great cause of the state, it is necessary to reject all private, group, and party slogans. Only common national principles that rise above all, and only organic forces that unite all with common inner ties, can consolidate and enliven; party slogans and programs can only divide. Only curative power that comes from the sacred objects of national life and national culture, may once again unite the scattered parts of the Russian land into one. This is that common cause in which the intelligentsia and the people must come together, and in which the very opposition of the intelligentsia and the people must disappear, or at least lose its sharpness.

When, in light of this common cause that requires the uniting into one of the intelligentsia and the people, we consider the alienation of the intelligentsia from the people which appears as the cause of the collapse of the intelligentsia's consciousness, we come to the conclusion that this is not simply a case of alienation from the people, which coming together and reunification would easily help. This is rather a fall into an abyss, salvation from which can be achieved only through renunciation, only through the feat of spiritual liberation from the illusions of rationalistic utopianism.

VI

We have given the name rationalistic utopianism to that tendency of thought which caused the crisis of the intelligentsia's consciousness. We must now give a more precise definition of that state of consciousness, in order to show how the most sincere and well-meaning strivings of utopian thought bring evil instead of good; why, while striving to create a new life, in fact, they only destroy and deaden; why, while promising people an earthly paradise, they often lead to an earthly hell; and why, in place of happiness and universal organization, they drive everyone to the danger and chaos of anarchy and desolation.

The fundamental law of social life is founded on the tie of the social order with the higher objective bases of history. When human thought tears away from these ties, and tries to build community life on fancied and abstract principles, it inverts and distorts all natural relationships. That is the source of the inevitable disorganization and destruction which accompany it.

Every utopia promises mankind an elimination of social contradictions, a harmony of the individual with society, and unity of life. And every utopia claims that it knows those universal means which lead to the blessed condition of general harmony and peace. But precisely because of this, every utopia presents its own dream of universal organization and, along with that, of the simplification of life. They claim that one can find a single word, a single means, a single principle that has some omnipotent and all-healing significance; and that, in agreement with this principle, one can construct life according to reason, liberating it from contradictions, discord, and complexity, and one can lead to unity, agreement, and harmonious simplicity.

Human history has always moved, and always will move, through growing contradictions, through the conflict of opposing principles to higher complexity. It achieves unity in the relative fusion of multi-faceted differences and growing ties, and not in an absolute reconciliation of contradictions. The light of reason determines the paths of history, but never eliminates its creative depths, its endless possibilities, or its irrational bases. This is why each utopia proposes an interruption of history, a miracle of social transformation, and, in its realization, leads to coercion over history, to evil attempts at sorcery and witchcraft.

The assumption of the possibility of a rational organization and simplification of life masks yet another proposal going further and deeper: that evil and suffering may be conquered by human reason in a perfect social order, and that they are tied only to the imperfections of institutions and the irrationality of relationships. There is a desire to solve the cosmological problem of evil and suffering in sociological terms, to conquer world evil by arranging social relationships. But if the struggle with social evil is the greatest task of state construction, then that attempt to uproot this evil completely and

immediately, as a self-deception of the human mind, turns out to be an even greater evil, leading to disasters still more burdensome and unbearable.

Finally, all the stated premises and propositions of rationalistic utopianism also mask a proposition which is logically linked with them: the denial of God and religion. To maintain that life may be constructed according to human reason, and that with the strength of human reason and human will it is possible to conquer the contradictions of history, the dissonances of the world, and the unique strivings and passions of the individual, also means to recognize this reason and this will in their supreme perfection as absolute and omnipotent, to give them a divine significance, to put them in the place of Divine Reason and Divine Will. It is not by chance that the greatest representatives of socialism and anarchism inherently alienate themselves from religion, and arm themselves against it. An inescapable logic is obvious here. The utopias of earthly paradise, which recognize the possible omnipotence and rule of human reason in life, cannot at the same time also recognize the inscrutable mysteries of Divine Providence. To want to organize life according to reason, so that human reason would be the only omnipotent sovereign, means also to believe that it is possible to organize without God and without religion.

This is the significance of that alienation into which the intelligentsia's consciousness fell, upon entering the path of rationalistic utopianism. This is a proud self-deception of the human mind, which has dreamt of its omnipotence, and which has fallen away from the organic forces and principles of the world process. And the only fruits of this self-deception are unresolvable contradictions and unavoidable destruction. With all its aspirations in the future, utopianism tries to sever all ties with the past; calling on man to seek his well-being here on earth, utopianism separates him from everything transcendental and other-worldly. But such comprehensive criticism, which destroys history and religion, and unsettles everything earthly and heavenly, consequently creates around man a void of destruction and a chaos of disorder, in which one cannot find the exit to the desired light. In the final analysis, these destroyers and thunderers often find it necessary to postulate the laws of history, the necessity of the gradual preparation of the future, and the higher law of life, that is, to return to those premises of objective idealism which, in principle, rationalistic utopianism rejects. Here utopianism finds its limit and its overthrow. Life brings utopian consciousness back to historical soil, puts it in its proper place, and subordinates it to its own path and laws. This is what comprises the destruction of utopias, the destruction which characterizes the crisis of the intelligentsia's consciousness.¹⁰

10. I give a more detailed development of these principles in my book, *On the Social Ideal*, part 2.

But for this crisis, this serious illness of the spirit, to be effectively cured, it is obviously not enough that utopian thought give only formal recognition to the presence of higher laws of history. So long as these laws allow room for the self-exaltation of subjective consciousness, and for the self-deceptions of utopianism, their recognition remains purely external and verbal. It is also inadequate for the intelligentsia simply to get down to practical activity and come together with the people. If it enters into practical life with all the sins and ailments of utopian consciousness, if its activity is to be dominated by the destructive ideas of the intelligentsia's dissociation, then nothing will be achieved by this, except the further derangement of life. All of us, sons of a single Russia, in agreement with the call of the old leaders of the Russian people, must enter on the path of service "to the great cause of God and country." Only the love of our national achievement, our culture, and our state, will deliver both all of us and Russia from our extremely grave ordeal.

The Curse of Perun

I

An ancient Novgorod legend recounts that in the days of St. Vladimir, when the Novgorodians threw the idol of Perun into the Volkhov, the angry god, swimming to the bridge, threw a stick at them with the words: "This to you Novgorodians, in my memory." From then on, at certain times, the Novgorodians gather with sticks on the Volkhov Bridge and begin to fight like madmen.

Kliuchevskii recalls this legend in connection with his characterization of that foundation of our ancient popular rule, the ancient Russian *veche*. "Because of the very composition of the *veche*," he says, "there could be neither regular discussion of a question, nor regular voting. Decision was taken on sight, or rather, on sound; more by the force of shouts, than by the majority of voices. When the *veche* divided into parties, the decision was reached in a coercive way, by means of a fight. The winning side was considered to be the majority. . . . Sometimes the whole city 'was rent' into contending parties, and then two *veches* assembled at the same time. . . . It happened more than once that the discord ended only when both *veches*, moving against each other, came together at the great Volkhov Bridge and began the carnage, if the clergy had not managed to separate the opponents in time."¹

Thus the overthrown Perun got revenge on the Novgorodians. It turned out that in overthrowing him the Novgorodians came to be governed, in the final analysis, by the stick.

But was Perun's vengeance limited to the Novgorodians alone? Alas, we now know that it was not; the evil curse came to rest on all of the Russian people and on all of its history up to the present time. We know that the *veche*'s popular rule of the stick was replaced by the autocracy's rule of the stick: the staff of Ivan the Terrible; the cudgel of Peter the Great; and the canes of Nicholas I. The recently achieved "liberation" has been capped by the "dictatorship of the proletariat," and once again the picture of old Russian "popular rule" drawn above is repeated, only this time in dimensions that encompass all of Russia. Is there not now the same absence of regular discussion of questions and regular voting? Are decisions not made "more by the force of shouts,

1. V. O. Kliuchevskii, *Kurs russkoi istorii* (The Course of Russian History), 2nd ed. 5 vols. (Moscow: Sinodal'naia tip., 1904-10), II, 83-84.

than by the majority of voices?" Is it not true that with division into parties "a decision is worked out in a coercive way, by means of a fight?" The difference, of course, is that instead of comparatively modest old-fashioned sticks, we now use rifles and machine guns, and, instead of the little Volkhov Bridge, we now have a large number of major internal fronts.

Perun's stick is on a spree. Either we savagely strike ourselves, or they savagely strike us; we seem not to know any other means of living together and any other means of fulfilling our national "self-determination."

II

The transition from monarchy to republic, in general, is a critical and dangerous moment. The fact is that the authority of the monarchy and the monarch himself always rest on a certain *irrational* basis. In the popular psyche, monarchical authority, to a greater or lesser degree, is always given some kind of suprarational sanction, in consequence of which this authority is submitted to more easily and more simply, especially where it has the antiquity of centuries behind it. Elected, democratic authority is completely deprived of that kind of irrational support; it must rely exclusively on *rational* motives and, most of all, on civic recognition of the necessity of order and authority in general. These rational motives are rarely equal in strength to those that existed before, and therefore it is not surprising that contemporary sociologists observe that the democratization of states almost always leads to a weakening of the psychological influence of authority and the psychological strength of law. For who invests persons with authority? Who issues laws? It is our representatives—that is, in the final analysis, ourselves. And so, power and law are deprived of their former mystical authority. In this way—says J. Cruet²—the very idea of popular sovereignty which gives the most solid *juridical* basis to law, at the same time, *psychologically* weakens the moral authority of law. After all, in essence, any democratic and parliamentary regime is nothing other than the rule of the critical spirit ("*le gouvernement de l'esprit critique*"). This is the best and the worst thing about it. . . .

Given that fact, it is completely understandable that our Russian revolutionary transition from monarchy to popular rule presented exceptional dangers in this regard. It all comes down to a question of whether, in unusually difficult circumstances, our people will be able to go over from irrational to rational bases of order and obedience immediately and quickly, and whether it will be able to perceive its genuine national interests and establish appropriate discipline in its ranks.

2. Jean Cruet, *La vie du droit et l'impuissance des lois* (Paris: Flammarion, 1908), p. 219.

We know that history was not kind to our people in this regard; it was not given gradual and sufficient preparation. The intellectual darkness and the political immaturity of the masses were a secret to no one. If there was anything to place one's hope on, it was only on the healthy instincts of the people, yes . . . and on the *rational leadership of it on the part of the intelligentsia*.

And how did the latter conduct itself?

III

The scant interest of our intelligentsia in questions of law has long been noted. It is true that recently the situation seemed to improve somewhat, nevertheless broad circles of Russian intellectual society have remained ill-informed and insensitive in this regard. And one must say this applies equally to both camps that for so long have fought each other in our midst—the idealistic camp and the materialistic camp.

The intelligentsia of the first, *idealistic* camp passionately and, one must think, sincerely seeks absolute good and absolute justice. In these quests it divides into circles and sects, revealing great intensity of moral feeling, and often even reaching the deepest religious pathos. But, at the same time, in the matter of the practical organization of life, it appears in some ways to be helpless, and sometimes, one must say, even insensitive. Seeking absolute justice, the idealistic camp pays no attention at all to that world of the relative in which we live; thirsting after absolute good, it follows badly those practical paths which we must necessarily travel. Consequently, it often happens that as if blinded by our inner vision we forge ahead, destroying unwittingly many of those values we ourselves would wish to affirm. For the sake of "the distant," we stifle "the close at hand"; for the sake of freedom, we commit an endless number of coercive acts. And thus it happens that, immersed in dreams about the establishment of the Kingdom of God on earth, we are not at all able to construct an everyday kingdom of the present. Dreaming about absolute justice, we live in frightful injustice; dreaming about heavenly purity, we remain in a veritable moral quagmire.

For the same reason, we view law with condescension and contempt. We remain entirely on the higher plane of ethics, in the world of the absolute, and we want nothing to do with that highly relative and imperfect order of human relations which is the law.

More than that! It seems to many that to be consistent they should frankly *deny* law. All legal order—they say—rests on authority and coercion; by its very idea it excludes freedom of will and, therefore, contradicts the basic demands of morality. And thus, as is known, we Russians are highly inclined toward *anarchism*. For no other current of thought in the world have we contributed so many prominent theoreticians as for anarchism (L. Tolstoi, Bakunin, Kropotkin).

Of course, we think about a society of saints, and in this society—even the jurists say—there is no need for law. Law leads to its own destruction, and therefore we leave the dead to bury the dead.

Likewise for the other side, for the *materialistic* camp of our intelligentsia, law also does not have independent value. Human history does not move according to certain ideas of truth and justice, but purely by material forces—by the *interests* of social groups and classes. Law only sanctions the factual relationship of forces created by the struggle of these interests. In this way, there is nothing creative in law itself; it only states that which is created by factors lying far beyond its limits. And it is natural, given these conditions, that our attention inclines primarily toward these latter factors. No matter how these factors are defined more closely—it makes no difference. The result for law is the same; it is ignored.

But even this is not all. Behind this disregard, there often lurks a more or less definite *repudiation*. We mean by this, not the repudiation of one or another separate (even if very important) norm or institution, for example, marriage or private property, but a negative attitude toward the very *idea of law* in general.

In fact, if the fullest realization of the class interests of the proletariat or peasantry is the highest criterion of politics, then from this point of view any legal norms or guarantees may prove to be directly harmful under certain conditions. This is precisely when these guarantees (for example, the guarantee of a fair trial, the inadmissibility of the death penalty, etc.) constrain the action of the proletariat or the peasantry, or the authority set up by them. Then they are undesirable, harmful, and burdensome. Thus, law appears simply as a certain barrier, behind which they hide so long as they must defend themselves, but which will become a hindrance as soon as they feel sufficiently strong to go on the offensive. Therefore, on the lips of representatives of this camp, talk about law always smacks of insincerity. They clamor a great deal about it, if they find themselves in the position of the vanquished, but quickly forget it, if they appear to be the conquerors. The only thing they admit in essence, and bow down before in actuality, is force. One is right to the degree one has force. The experience of the Russian revolution with its “dictatorships,” “revolutionary sense of justice,” “creation of law from below,” and various other things like them, supports what has been said in a most clear and tangible way.

IV

Given its own general frame of mind, what could the intelligentsia teach the people, especially in such a critical moment of its history? Could it teach the people to respect law, when it did not respect law itself? Could it give the people a rational basis for submission to authority and law, when it did not sense that basis itself?

Evidently not. But it was able to do something worse. It was able to cast slogans out into the dark and ignorant masses that could destroy whatever remained there, rouse the basest instincts, and lead toward the destruction of the most ultimate and elementary bases of society. And this it did. . . .

We are far from saying that the *entire* Russian intelligentsia is guilty of this. We know that from the very beginning of the revolution there were not a few people who warned against the unceremonious treatment of law, and who called the people to discipline and to the strict observation of order and legality. But their voices were soon drowned out. The "force of the shout" remained behind the extreme wings of both tendencies we have just described, in which indifference to law became its direct repudiation.

There is nothing more to say about *anarchism*; whatever might have been its theoretical foundations, its social and psychological consequences are not subject to doubt. If there is any teaching which, in fact, presupposes a saintly people, then surely it is anarchism; without this, it inescapably degenerates into a bestial *bellum omnium contra omnes*.³ Destroying ultimate legal restraints, anarchism hands the human community over to the will of individual egoism and egoistical appetites. Not penetrating to the depths of the teaching, where at least there are some kinds of correctives against this, the ignorant mind adopts from it only its simplified, militant slogans and sees in them only one thing: the liberation of its own egoism from any limitations. The most widespread orgy of all kinds of crimes is the unavoidable consequence of this in the aroused popular psyche. For neither life, nor a neighbor's property is guaranteed; I can look at everything exclusively as the means for the satisfaction of my own interests. The only thing that might still restrain me and introduce certain limits—is a stick from the other side.

Another extreme teaching—*materialistic socialism*—introduced no less poison in people's minds. Affirming that law and morality are only "ideological superstructures," it thereby destroyed any of their normative significance, and removed them as an instance standing above interests, having the right to judge them. No evaluation other than an evaluation from the point of view of class interest is even possible. Therefore the struggle for one's class interests, everywhere and by any means, is lawful. Any interest of my class is a lawful interest, because there is no higher deciding instance, outside and above the area of interests. On the other hand, any means for the protection of this interest are allowable, because what, save their technical uselessness for that goal, can force us to refrain from them? What kind of reflex all such teachings would provoke in that dark and extremely agitated popular soul might have been feared earlier; reality, however, surpassed the most somber fears.

3. "A war of all against all." *Ed.*

The "materialistic interpretation of history" was transformed into the crudest materialistic understanding of life. All higher manifestations of the human spirit—conscience, honor, the need for truth, justice, etc.—disappeared under pressure from the most elementary lusts of the body. The "economics" of the theory, in practice, was transformed into a nightmarish debauch of totally unrestrained animal instincts, into an orgy of murder, mockery, and robbery. Disdain for "ideological superstructures" grew into monstrous hostility to everything that bore the mark of intellectuality and culture.

Class egoism completely destroyed the concept of the state and the people as a whole. The "proletariat," as a special class, whose parameters moreover, remained unclear, separated itself from the general body of the people and assumed an intolerant, militant stance in relation to everyone else. The class struggle took the form of the most embittered hatred toward everyone who is "not with us." There is no people, only us, "the proletarians"; all others should either not exist at all, or should unquestioningly serve us. Thus, the "dictatorship of the proletariat," henceforth celebrated in history, took shape. Animosity and hatred comprise its soul, destruction is its natural element, and universal slavery is its result.

In their animosity, they are not fastidious about means. All the most elementary principles of any common cultural life, if once they stand in the path of what is desired, are declared bourgeois inventions, and with amazing daring are swept aside. Among these are any human, simply human, rights. Because with us, at the present time, man as such does not exist, there is either a "proletarian" (and beyond that, "one who stands on the Soviet platform"), meaning a member of the class that rules without restraint, or a "bourgeois," who is a being completely without rights. There are no "rights," nor is there any kind of "law." In place of the latter there is only the "revolutionary legal consciousness" of the conquerors, that is, their most undisguised arbitrariness.

When this spirit of unrestrained class egoism, provoked by the general socialist preaching, began to bear its terrible fruit, part of the socialist intelligentsia itself became troubled and began to hark back—to the idea of the fatherland, to the maintenance of order, and to discipline in labor. But the people no longer heard them. They were all the more unheard, in that the other part of that same socialist camp continued its base undertaking. Agitating the masses, and in turn being agitated by them, this part of the socialist camp rose to the true pathos of misanthropy and hysterical frenzy. Perhaps in some "lucid intervals" certain Bolshevik leaders had a brief glimpse of the idea that it was necessary to stop, and begin to do at least some kind of positive work (in such moments we even hear them calling to the proletariat for work and discipline). But on this path of positive construction they were doomed fatally to failure. Then and there it became obvious that they no longer led the masses behind them, but that the masses drove them on. They succeed when they call for destruction, expropriation, and confiscation, and so on, but they lose absolutely any

authority, when they dare to go against the grain. An unambiguous roar, addressed right to them, was the answer to their call for order. And they abandoned their attempts and once again hurled themselves on the old path of social savagery, furious hounding, and punishment without trial.

Thus it continues even now. Instead of assisting the moral convalescence of the people, they systematically continue to corrupt it. Instead of calling for the unification of all people in the name of general salvation from the external yoke, they directly or indirectly surrender the people to this yoke, if only to bring to its conclusion their monstrous formula "peace at the front, war in the rear." But there still is no peace "at the front," and "war in the rear" has been transformed into a general Russian carnage. History has scarcely seen greater senselessness and greater national disgrace.

This is what the "tutelage" of our socialist intelligentsia has led to! At a great heroic moment, when called upon to lead its people through all historic temptation and danger, the intelligentsia itself caused the people to fall into the abyss and gave it over to the enemy. Obligated to help the people in the creative task of constructing a new free order, it evoked national civil war and anarchy instead. Like a player on the stock market who has gone too far, having been carried away by the pursuit of a social structure unprecedented on earth, it gambled away the gift of freedom that the people already had. Instead of the noble greatness of a liberated genius, it showed the world the baseness of a slave in revolt, and displayed the Russian people in the guise of a drunken Caliban, shamed before all the world and all the ages.

V

If the sin is great, so must the expiation be great. After months of sin, there must follow long decades of repentance and difficult work for the reconstruction of the shattered society.

The intelligentsia must, first of all, recognize and feel complete responsibility for each word with which it approaches the people. I will not speak about the necessity of unconditional honesty and sincerity in the propagation of its ideas; but even granting this, we must remember that the expressed thought more often than not evokes an effect in the collective psychology of the masses completely different from that which would have followed from the objective content of the thought itself. Any intellectual intercourse is a two-sided process, which depends on the qualities and peculiarities of the psychological apparatus of both sides; and if we want to achieve a proper understanding of our thoughts, we must take into account the peculiarities of the apparatus of those who receive them. Otherwise, the most deplorable psychological side effects and horrendous distortions might result, as has already happened with such concepts as democracy, socialism, bourgeoisie, and so on. Generally, we must remember that the collective psychology is something complicated in the high-

est degree, filled with irrational and capricious phenomena. Sometimes it is easy to stir up a storm in it, but afterwards difficult to quiet the storm.

However, the first thing that our intelligentsia must do is an honest and careful review of its own intellectual baggage. It must admit that in the grave trials of the present it appeared bankrupt, even from the point of view of its own education, that is, from the point of view of its knowledge and its understanding. It turned out to be ill-informed, and sometimes even completely uninformed, about all that which it had boldly taken upon itself to solve. Thus it must educate itself, before it teaches others.

And first of all, I propose that it should alter its attitude toward the *idea of law*.

The *materialistic* camp of our intelligentsia, in particular, should ponder the following: while maintaining that the proletariat or the peasantry has the right to strive for the realization of its class interests, simply because these are its interests, ethically you place on the same docket the interests you defend and the interests that contradict them. If the question is posed in that way, the interests of the capitalists or the landowners are ethically just as lawful as the interests of the workers. There is a class, and here is a class, and if that class has the right to fight for its interests, then this class has the right to do the same. Not admitting any kind of higher ethical instance above interests and classes, you propose struggle, that is, in fact, force, as the only resolution to such conflicts of interest. And, in those circumstances, even your opponent may say: "If that is the case then we will see who will get whom—whether you get me, or I get you." In other words, by your very own teaching, you justify struggle against yourself, and you infuse moral energy and consciousness of his legitimacy into the soul of your opponent.

In reality, of course, you do not allow such ethical equality to the capitalist or the landowner; you consider the demands of the worker or peasant class more just, and more deserving of recognition and approval. But why? It does not matter what grounds are proposed for this, you must admit that resorting to these grounds you depart from your naked theory of interests, as such, and mentally evaluate the struggle for interests according to some higher ethical criterion. Above the struggling interests, you unwittingly think of some higher instance, above the classes, which approves the one and rejects the other, regardless of which of them triumphs in the actual struggle. Turning over in your mind the claims of the protagonists, you inadvertently think that in some cases the claims are lawful, while in others they are not.

In this way, against your will, you operate with an understanding of *lawful* and *unlawful*. But, of course, it could not be otherwise. After all, you do not personally recognize every one of your own interests as lawful and liable to realization; some of your interests you reject yourself, as not permissible on one or another grounds. But the same must be said in relation to the interests of whole social groups or classes. Even among the latter, you know, there may

be those interests that must be called impermissible, for example, an interest in a privileged and exploitive relationship in regard to other groups. If, up to now, the capitalist and landowner classes had been guilty of this, then in the future there might arise the same kind of exploitative pretensions in the class of industrial workers in regard to the peasants, or the other way around; and in the class of skilled workers in regard to the unskilled, or the other way around, and so on. While the human race is still imperfect, all kinds of conflicts on these grounds are unavoidable, and, therefore, even in regard to whole groups, classes, and societies it is surely necessary to remember the well-known principle: *not for everything in which we have an interest, do we also have a right*. Thus, the criterion of right dominates over the criterion of interest, and comprises that concept without which we may neither think nor act.

However we might define this criterion of right more closely, and however we might define its basic principle, in any case we are already on the plane of a certain kind of *ethical* evaluation, and on the plane of judgment about what one *ought* to do. And on this plane, no materialistic conception of history can have binding significance for us; what was and what is, in principle, does not determine what ought to be.

In view of all that has been said, a more careful attitude toward law, a greater respect for it, becomes obligatory for any sincere thinker. Dissatisfaction with the existing legal order in no way justifies a scorn for law in general; if the present evaluations of what is lawful and what is unlawful are mistaken, then it is all the more necessary to rework and clarify new, more authentic ones. However we sketch the social order we desire in the future, it must, first of all, be justified as a legal and equitable order; without this it will be experienced by all, even those for whom it is an advantage, as naked coercion. If the differentiation of labor does not disappear, then neither will a certain division of society into groups, each with its own interests, and if we do not want the living together of these groups to produce an uninterrupted war among themselves, we must regulate their collaboration on recognized, just, and legal bases. And for this we must decide what is lawful and what is unlawful.

But if, in this way, the materialistic camp of our intelligentsia must inject itself with a certain degree of idealism, then conversely, the other, *idealistic*, camp must pay more attention to the mundane and the relative. And, again, this leads it necessarily to that very same law.

Of course, law is an external and conventional order, but this does not mean that, in essence, it is something unnecessary for human relations. I believe there is no reason to make a refutation of anarchism; this teaching is supported, not by the power of its argument, but by the power of the mood it arouses. I only point out that even if people really were guided in their lives by moral motives, even then it would be impossible for them in their life together to avoid certain external, conventional rules. After all, it is well-known that morality is something that is maintained only by the strength of inner, individual conviction. If, on the strength of my entire understanding of the world, I recog-

nize certain conduct as obligatory for myself, then I must act in that way, even though others might think differently; were I to act as others think necessary, then in order to please them I would deny my own inner moral ordinance. To please the world, I would bow to idols. Consequently, moral demands may be completely varied and irreconcilable. Yet, somehow, people must live together, and for this they must create the kind of conventional order of mutual relations in which each individual will be guaranteed, in equal measure, the possibility of his physical and spiritual existence, the possibility of his moral perfection.

For this reason, the statement often heard (even among jurists) is incorrect, stating that law itself leads to its own abolition, that in a society of moral, saintly people, it will become completely superfluous. People may be saintly, but each in his own way; and for their living together, something in common is necessary.

Moreover, even if we were to conceive of saintly people of *one* faith, people who love each other boundlessly, with *one* love, even then they cannot avoid certain purely exterior and conventional rules of community life, at least, so long as they will remain people and remain in the usual conditions of mundane existence. After all, any community life must involve cooperation, and any cooperation presupposes a certain regulated application of force and organization. It may be that in some close society all of its members love one another and are prepared in every way to help one another, but if they are required to make some common effort for some kind of common work, they need a regulation of labor; otherwise the selfless, but disparate, efforts expended by all will be useless. If they have to raise a beam, then it is necessary that all seize it at the same time, and that someone gives the command, "One!" etc. Law provides such necessary organization, and in this capacity it never loses its necessity for any human, community life.

Finally, if the negative attitude toward law is sustained by the opinion that law is directly linked with coercion and directly supported by it, then one need only examine this opinion more closely to be convinced that it is not true. Even now, there are many legal norms—and the most essential ones at that—which have no punitive sanctions (for example, constitutional laws). In those cases where punishments for infringement of law are established, they become milder and milder with the growth of culture, and it really may be said that legal *coercion* leads to its own abolition. Law aims to become the kind of order which will be followed, not from the fear of punishment, but simply from recognition of its necessity and reasonableness, the way this already occurs in close comradesly or social circles of the present day.

Thus, a closer examination should convince our idealists that denial or scorn of law in no way derives from the essence of their idealistic world view; on the contrary, it is explained only by their own inadequate attention to certain aspects of the latter. When this error is corrected, they will see for themselves how much of value and importance for the legal structure of life they will be able to say from their own point of view.

VI

As is well known, a legal and state organization is created by the collective, mental activity of the people, a *sobor* activity in the broadest sense of the word. There are peoples for whom this creation comes relatively easily and simply—rational self-organization seems to be in their blood; and there are peoples who do it with great effort, by way of hard and agonizing experience. We Russians, evidently, belong to the latter type. How many difficult and shameful pages have we written in our own history, due entirely to our inability to interact with each other rationally, and due to our fatal tendency “to divide into parties!” At the present moment, perhaps, we are writing the most shameful page.

With our own hands, we have torn our state and our people to shreds; we have not only torn them into “self-defined” territorial pieces but also into “self-defined” social classes. With our own hands, we have destroyed our defense—the army and navy, our administrative, productive, and transport apparatus, and so on—in a word everything a people, in present conditions, needs to live. We destroyed everything, but evidently we are still not satisfied. Every day brings more and more novel convulsions of this sort, and it seems that we will stop, only when all we have left of the Russian people is a torn and cold corpse.

But one does not want to believe this. One does not want to believe that what we experience now is the actual death of the Russian people and the Russian state—that this is the genuine end and the grave.

In anguish you look around: where is the savior? And a certain voice prompts us: he is there, in the very Russian people that has now so savagely ripped itself to shreds; he is there, in its healthy instincts and healthy sense, which are now so befuddled and distorted with the clamorous slogans that have swooped down upon it. He is there, because the people itself has not yet said *its* word; others have spoken for it. Struck dumb by the suddenness and the massiveness of the revolution that has taken place, the people was silent for a time; it waited and thought, but then and there, these others swooped down upon it, enervated its thoughts, and aroused the beast in it.

While the people constantly dreamt about a life ordered according to justice and according to God, the socialists began to tell it that all of justice and all of God consisted in the guarding of material class interests, and that outside of these interests, there was no truth and no justice.

At a time when the people, with a great historical effort, was collecting itself into a single, great whole, with an instinctive feeling that only under these conditions would it be able to develop all the richness of its spiritual forces, they began to suggest the limitless “self-determination” of its parts, that is, dismemberment to the point of non-existence.

While the people was thirsting for peace, in general, they began forcefully to suggest “war in the rear,” they began in every way to arouse the spirit of

evil, cupidity, and destruction in its soul. They let it taste fraternal Russian blood. . . . And here, poisoned by that blood, the people milled about in some kind of insane despair, from side to side, from one murder or robbery to another, while *they* take this moral despair for socialism! . . .

While the people needed to come to its senses as quickly as possible, to collect itself, and in healthy mind and sound memory begin to bring the fragments of the state into order, they injected it with ever new doses of poison. First individuals, and then whole categories, were declared "enemies of the people" and "outside the law," which naturally meant a direct invitation to new murder and mob rule.

For the present, the nightmare grows and widens, but inevitably the turning must begin. A people stubbornly building its state over the centuries, despite the most unfavorable circumstances and, besides, essentially thanks only to its own common sense, cannot disappear. It surely will awaken, and once again, with the centuries, begin to correct that which was corrupted in so few days and months. The people will yet have its say!

But how will you live on, you who are spiritually guilty of all this unprecedented moral horror? What will you hear from every quarter?

Whenever you think about the people, stupefied and enticed to the abyss by you, will you not hear the fateful words: "Woe to him who tempts one of the least of these; it would be better for him to hang a stone around his neck and throw himself into the deep."

Whenever you recall all of the blood which was spilled thanks to your spiritual license, whenever you recall the mass slaughter of your closest brother intellectuals, will you not hear around you: "Cain, Cain, what have you done with your brother?"⁴

July 1918

PETR BERNGARDOVICH STRUVE

*The Historical Meaning
of the Russian Revolution
and National Tasks*

By God's tolerance an unmentionable misfortune has befallen the Muscovite state and all the great Russian land, for the countless sins of our people.

From the *gramota* of Patriarch Hermogen

Most of all God will call you to account for the fact that in your depravity you are not in union with us, and all the surrounding states shall call you betrayers of your faith and fatherland. But most of all, how will you answer before the righteous Judge at the Second Coming?

From the *gramota* of the Iaroslavians to the Vologdians

The Russian revolution is a national bankruptcy and a worldwide disgrace—this is the unquestionable moral and political result of the events we have lived through since February, 1917.

The search for the causes of this staggering catastrophe, which is called the Russian revolution, and which, unlike the inner crises experienced by other peoples, signifies in all respects the greatest degradation of our people, is of prime importance for its entire future. Of course, the fortunes of peoples are not advanced and decided by reasoning. They are decided by strivings, at the basis of which lie feelings and passions. But any such strivings take the form of the ideas in which they are formulated. Passion can become a powerful, moving, and creative force in the historical process, only when it has risen to the level of an idea, while an idea, in its turn, must be embodied in passion.¹ In order to create an *idea-passion* that can subjugate to itself our feelings and will, and infect us to the point of ecstasy and selflessness—we must first measure the full depth of the degradation into which we have fallen; we must

1. Among fighters for the liberation of the peasants, the thought about liberation was not merely "thought," but, as Nikolai Turgenev has testified in his explanatory (justifying) note on his own participation in the Decembrist movement, a "passion."

first feel and think through our debasement, completely and to the end. This is the important purifying work of self-knowledge. However, negative self-knowledge, composed of meditation, confession, and indignation, is not sufficient for the regeneration of the nation. Clear positive ideas are necessary, and the transformation of these ideas into powerful creative passions.

I want to outline the way I understand those actual psychological conditions which led us to national bankruptcy and worldwide disgrace, and then develop those idea-passions that can, and must, cleanse us with their fire and save Russia.

II

The prevailing, current explanation of that catastrophe which is called, and in the future no doubt will be called, the Russian *revolution* (although, in a certain sense, its right to this still *morally* significant title is rather doubtful), consists first of all of references to the ignorance and lack of culture of the people. But this explanation can in no way satisfy either the politician, who, as a real and responsible participant in events, judges their real meaning, or the historian, who analyzes them objectively and compares them with the past of his own and other peoples. The Russian people was much more ignorant and uncultured in the days of Stenka Razin and Emel'ka Pugachev, than now; at that time, all of its component parts were, so to speak, less cultured throughout than in our time. On the other hand, it is hardly true that the mass of the contemporary Russian people is less cultured than were the French and English peoples at the times of their own authentic and authentically great revolutions. How easily we forget that the "cultural level" of the masses, where it is present and to the degree it can actually be observed, is an achievement almost exclusively of the nineteenth century, and that for the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, one cannot speak about the cultural level of the masses, even in the most advanced nations of the West.

Thus, we must decisively reject the reference to the lack of culture in the masses as superficial, and to put it bluntly, simply stupid.

Related to this are references to the "regime" (the "old order," etc.). Meanwhile, one of the most noteworthy lessons of the Russian revolution is a discovery that is instructive and significant in both a practical-political and a theoretical-sociological sense. From one perspective, it is the discovery of the degree to which the overthrown monarchical regime was *technically* satisfactory. From another perspective, it is the discovery of the degree to which the very inadequacies of this regime were rooted, not in its systems and institutions, not in the "bureaucracy," the "police," and the "autocracy," as the generally accepted explanation would have it, but in the temper of the people, or in the entire social environment. To some extent, the latter were even held in check by those same systems and institutions.

The revolution that brought down the "regime" uncovered and unbridled Gogolian Russia, dressing it up in a red cap; in essence, Soviet power is a Nicholaian mayor, elevated to the highest authority of a great state. In the revolutionary period, Khlestakov, as the symbol of a cultural type, received a promotion from Collegiate Registrar to a personage of the first class, and *The Inspector General* was transformed from a comedy of provincial manners into a tragedy of statehood. The Gogolian-Shchedrinian aspect of the great Russian revolution is an indisputable historical fact.

At the present time, when we live under the authority of the Soviet bureaucracy and under the heel of the Red Guard, we begin to understand what the bureaucracy and police of the overthrown monarchy were, and what cultural role they fulfilled. That which was caricature to Gogol' and Shchedrin, has been embodied in frightening reality by the Russian revolutionary democracy.

III

The occurrence of the Russian revolution is explained by the coincidence of two things: the perverted ideological education the Russian intelligentsia received during the course of almost all of the nineteenth century; and the influence of the great World War on the masses. Wartime conditions made the people especially receptive to the demoralizing preaching of the intelligentsia's ideas. The perverted ideological education of the intelligentsia stems from the fact that the shortsighted, jealous defense of undivided authority by the monarchy and the narrow circle of elements close to it, alienated a wide circle of educated people from the state. It blinded this intelligentsia with hatred of historical authority, at the same time having made it insensitive and blind in relation to the anti-cultural and bestial forces that slumber in the masses. For centuries, the old autocratic regime relied on the social authority and political obedience of the landed nobility, that class which created Russian culture, and without whose creative work the nation itself would not have existed. Systematically denying any sharing of power in the matter of organizing and governing the state, first to this class and then to the intelligentsia which developed on its stem, the autocracy created a psychology and tradition of dissociation from the state in the soul, thoughts, and customs of Russian educated people. This dissociation is the same destructive force that has spilled over to all the people, and which, combined with the people's material lusts and desires, shattered a great and multi-faceted state.

IV

In *Signposts*, I pointed out the genesis and genealogy of this dissociation, in regard to its time and general features.² Someday, a coherent and complete history of Russia in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries can and should be written from this point of view. Here, I cannot even present excerpts from such a generalized historical work, but still I would like to illuminate several of the decisive moments of this process of alienation and dissociation of the cultured classes from the Russian state that led to the revolutionary catastrophe of 1917, and the years to follow.

Vladimir Il'ich Lenin-Ul'ianov ultimately was able to destroy the great power of Russia, and introduce on top of its ruins the bloody, phantasmal Soviets of Deputies, because, in 1730, an offshoot of the Romanov dynasty, a niece of Peter the Great, Anna Ioannovna, the Duchess of Kurland, defeated Prince Dmitrii Mikhailovich Golitsyn and his fellow aristocrats, along with the middling gentry, who strove for freedom but feared the "magnates." With that defeat the foundation was finally laid for the tradition of a Russian monarchy established on the political submissiveness of the cultured classes before an independent higher authority. In their basic content and character, the events of 1730 had a fatal predetermining influence on the political destiny of Russia.³

At that time, monarchical authority, the autocracy, defeated the constitutional aspirations of both the *boiar* aristocracy, the magnates, and the middling gentry, the *shliakhetstvo*. And how did autocracy defeat these social forces?—by relying on the physical military force of the gentry guards, later called the Life Guard Companies, that is, by relying on the soldiery, which had a direct interest in the triumph of the monarchy over the magnates and the middling gentry.⁴ At the same time, as is well-known, the disagreement

2. The essay "Intelligentsia and Revolution," reprinted thereafter in the symposium *Patriotica*. [P. B. Struve, *Patriotica, politika, kul'tura, religiia, sotsializm: Sbornik statei za piat' let, 1905-1910* (Patriotica, Politics, Culture, Religion, Socialism: A Symposium of Articles from Five Years, 1905-1910) (St. Petersburg: D. E. Zhukovskii, 1911). Ed.]

3. Besides the general works on Russian history, of which the corresponding volume (XIX) of Solov'ev's *History of Russia* and Kostomarov's monograph on Anna Ioannovna are especially valuable, the best collection and outline of materials on the events of 1730 is given in the book by D. A. Korsakov, *Votsarenie imperatritsy Anny Ioannovny* (The Accession of Empress Anna Ioannovna) (Kazan': Tip. Imperatorskago universiteta, 1880); the article by P. N. Miliukov, "Verkhovniki i shliakhetstvo" (Aristocrats and Shliakhetstvo), in *Iz istorii russkoi intelligentsii* (From the History of the Russian Intelligentsia) (St. Petersburg: Znanie, 1902); and the brochure of M. M. Bogoslovskii, *Konstitutsionnoe dvizhenie 1730g.* (The Constitutional Movement of 1730) (Moscow: Tip. T-va I. D. Sytina, 1906).

4. "The guards stood clearly and positively for the autocracy: they were favorites of the Empress and could hope for even greater attention now that they had served her in

between the groups just mentioned was utilized. On the other hand, the way the constitutional aspirations of the middling gentry were mollified and overcome was also quite important. This was achieved by satisfying some of their vital interests. The *coup d'état* of 1730 had no political results, it was the state fiasco of the middling gentry, but its reflection in imperial legislation in the short run surely and quite substantially gratified the interests of the middling gentry.⁵ Thus the autocracy, having denied the cultured classes participation in ruling the state, again bound that class to itself with chains of material interest, thereby weening it from political strivings and means, and training it to protect its interests, apart from the raising and resolution of the *political question*.

The further course of Russia's political development was determined by the events of 1730. In the course of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the supreme authority finally came to see itself as a force independent of the "social" elements, called estates in those days, and separated itself into such a force. But, after a time, while one part of these social elements got used to thinking of state authority only in a form independent of "social" elements, and *adapted and humbled* its entire psychology to the level of that kind of state system; another part of them became more and more estranged from the real state, continuously carrying on a covert, underground, and at times overt, revolutionary struggle against it. From the middle of the nineteenth century, this dissociation from the state received an intellectual formulation, thanks to the acceptance of the West European ideas of radicalism and socialism by the Russian intelligentsia.

V

The concrete stages in which the political history of Russia unfolded in the direction indicated were the Decembrist uprising and the liberation of the peasants.

The Decembrist uprising was essentially an attempt to translate the schemes of the eighteenth-century middling gentry into the language of progressive European political thought of the nineteenth century, and to complicate and supplement the raising of political tasks with social problems (the liberation of the peasants).

But even in the eighteenth century, liberation of the peasants was posed as a problem of the personal liberation of the peasant-slaves, the creation of small

difficult circumstances" (Kostomarov). The grenadier company of the Preobrazhenskii regiment which accomplished the *coup d'état* of 25 November 1740 and the elevation to the throne of Elizabeth Petrovna, received the name "Life Guards Company." From there comes the expression, "life guardsers."

5. Compare Korsakov, p. 297, and Miliukov, pp. 49-51.

peasant holdings, and land tenure regulations as a condition of rational land tenure.⁶ Personal liberation of the peasants seemed imminent in the second half of the eighteenth century, when the attachment of the gentry to the state in obligatory gentry service was abolished; and therefore *it was a whole century late, and this lateness delayed and dragged into our own time the posing and resolution of two other sides of the peasant question*—the establishment of landed property and the regulation of land tenure.⁷

The delay of personal liberation of the peasants for a century or, in any case, for a half century, was merely the expression and consequence in the social area, of the victory of autocracy over constitutionalism that the Russian monarchy gained in 1730. *The Russian monarchy bought its way out of political reform with serfdom*. And the delay of personal peasant liberation also postponed the firm establishment of small landed property and land ten-

6. We recall that even for Radishchev the peasant question came down first to personal liberation, and after that to the establishment of peasant landed property, for which they would pay a head tax. In this way Radishchev proposed a gradual realization of reform.

7. The delayed and, so to speak, undivided character of the peasant reforms of 1861, reproduced in weakened "state" form, the Pugachev decree of 1774. By virtue of this, in the reform of 1861 central place was given to the allotment of land to the peasants. The other two factors—personal rights and the establishment of landed property on the bases of land tenure contracts did not receive proper recognition and prominence either with the authorities or with public opinion. In the period of preparation of the reforms, this was expressed especially clearly in the well known formulation of its tasks by Iurii Samarin. The Pugachev manifesto 31.VII.1774, which proclaimed liberation of the peasants, posed two tasks at once: the destruction of personal bondage and the land arrangements (not in the sense of land tenure arrangements, but in the sense of the allotment of lands) of the peasants; the first in patriarchal "autocratic-state" delineation, the second in the socialist "populist" delineation. This manifesto declared: "With this very *ukaz* we grant, out of our monarchal and fatherly charity, to all who earlier found themselves in the peasantry and in subjection to the *pomeshchiks* to be loyal subjects of our own crown, and we confer by the ancient cross and prayers, by head and beard, liberty and eternal Cossack freedom, not demanding the requisition of recruits, soul and other monetary taxes, the possession of the land, with forests, with haymaking areas, fishing rights and the salt lakes, without purchase and without *obrok*, and we liberate all those formerly subjugated, from the villainous *dyoriane* and from the town bribe-taking judges, from all taxes and oppressive acts inflicted on the peasantry and on all the people, and we wish you salvation of your souls and peaceful life on earth, for which we also experienced and suffered no little misfortune from similar as well as other villainous *dyoriane*." (cited according to V. I. Semevskii, *Krest'ianskii vopros v Rossii v XVIII i pervoi polovine XIX veka* (The Peasant Question in Russia in the Eighteenth and First Half of the Nineteenth Centuries) (St. Petersburg: Tip. Obshchestvennaia pol'za, 1888), Vol. I. The manifesto was first printed in the collection by Ia. K. Grot, *Materialy dlia istorii Pugachevskago bunta* (Materials on the History of the Pugachev Revolt) (St. Petersburg: Tip. Imperatorskoi Akademii nauk, 1875).

ure relationships.⁸ Today it must be perfectly obvious to us that the Russian monarchy collapsed in 1917, because it relied too long on the absence of political rights of the nobility and the absence of civil rights of the peasantry. From the absence of political rights of the gentry and other cultured classes, the intelligentsia's dissociation from the state was born. And this dissociation from the state produced those spiritual poisons that, having infected the peasantry—which up to 1861 had lived without rights and law, and without having developed in itself either the consciousness or instincts of property—pushed the peasant masses dressed in grey military coats toward the overthrow of the state and the economic order.

Up until recent times, there was a widespread, even dominant, view in Russian society claiming that it was fortunate the liberation of the peasants in Russia had not been preceded by a constitution proclaimed by, or in the interests of, the gentry. This *narodnik* view is completely misguided, in both its radical and conservative (monarchial) versions. The historic misfortune of Russia, to which the tragic catastrophe of 1917 reverts, on the contrary was conditioned by the fact that political reform was terribly delayed in Russia. For the sake of a healthy national-cultural development of Russia, political reform should have taken place no later than the beginning of the nineteenth century. Then, the delayed personal liberation of the peasants would have followed shortly thereafter, and the entire development of political and social relationships would have flowed more normally. The *narodnik* point of view, chasing after the utopia of the salvation of Russia from the "ulcer of the proletariat," considered and still considers the form in which the liberation of the peasants was accomplished to have been Russia's good fortune. Meanwhile, it has already become perfectly obvious that the collapse of the state structure and the profound damage to culture brought by the revolution, did not occur because we had too great an industrial, and, on the whole, urban proletariat, in the strict sense, but because our peasants did not become property owning bourgeois, as must any cultured, small landowner who possesses his land and manages his farm. We feared the development of a village proletariat, and because of this fear we were not able to create a village bourgeoisie. Only in the period immediately after the fall of the autocracy did state authority, in the person of Stolypin, begin on this singularly correct path. But persisting in its reactionary distrust of the cultured classes, and jealously

8. A critical history of the peasant question has yet to be written with a tripartite division of its basic problems: personal liberation; the establishment of peasant landed property; and land tenure relationships. In the Russian peasant reforms these three basic problems were often interchanged, often subsumed by the problem "allotment of land to the peasants." The distortion of the entire peasant reforms with the idea of "allotments," led to the agrarian revolution of 1917, which the country will have to overcome with great difficulties and sacrifices.

guarding its prerogatives from them, the authorities systematically pushed these classes into opposition. And this opposition was more and more penetrated with an anti-state spirit of dissociation. Thus the revolution was prepared and created from two ends: the historical monarchy with its jealous refusal to admit cultured and educated groups to authoritative participation in the structure of the state; and the intelligentsia of the country, with its shortsighted struggle against the state. In this struggle, despite the threatening warning of 1905-07, the intelligentsia as if guided by the motto: *Flectere si nequeo superos, Acheronta movebo*,⁹ poisoned the lower classes against the state and the historical monarchy, which for all its errors, vices, and crimes, nonetheless had expressed and maintained the unity and strength of the state.

Only a few people, who vividly sensed the fatal mutual responsibility of the vices of Russian state structure and of Russian society,¹⁰ fought in vain with both the folly of the intelligentsia and with the blindness of the authorities.

VI

In Russia, the victory of socialism or communism turned out to be the destruction of the state structure and the economic order, a wild outburst of pogrom-like passions, which in the final analysis threatened tens of millions of the population with death by starvation.

What occurred was a characteristically and essentially unique combination of the immense rationalistic arrogance of an insignificant group of leaders, on the one hand, and the unbridled instincts and desires of an uncertain majority of people, the masses, on the other.

Such was the actual manifestation in life of the preachings of revolutionary socialism, which rest on the idea of class conflict. The leaders themselves conceive of the organization of society according to the ideals of communism—as the goal, and of the breaking of existing spiritual bonds and the destruction of inherited social relationships and institutions—as the means. The masses do not accept, nor understand, nor are able to understand, the constructive goal of socialism, but, on the other hand, greedily apprehend and enthusiastically apply the destructive means.

Therefore the idea of socialism as an organization of economic life—regardless of whether this idea is correct or incorrect—is in no way comprehended by the Russian masses; socialism (or communism) is only thought of by them

9. "If I cannot persuade the Gods (those above), I shall move Hell." *Ed.*

10. The introduction to *Patriotica*: "Between the vices of Russian society and the vices of Russian state structure there is a fatal inner link, its own form of interacting responsibility."

as either a division of the available wealth, or as the receipt of a sufficient and equal ration, with the least expenditure of labor and with minimum obligations. The division of available wealth, equally or unequally, with or without recognition of the right of property, in any case, has nothing to do with socialism, as an idea about the organization of economic life. Nor is it a constructive socialist action, but rather a negative, individualistic one; it is simply a redistribution or transfer of wealth or property from certain hands into others.

"Just distribution," in the sense of receipt by each citizen of a sufficient or equal ration for the least sacrifice, is at best the final result of socialism for consumers. Without the socialist organization of the national economy, this result is lifeless and hangs in the air, it is the purest "consumption" without production.

Thus, socialism, as the idea of constructing a planned economy, appeared in Russian life as a rationalistic construct of an insignificant group of doctrinaire leaders, buoyed up by a wave of popular passion and lusts, but powerless to direct it. Socialism, as an idea about the division or redistribution of wealth, meaning concretely the destruction of most capital values, rests on the passive use, the squandering or the "consumption" of goods, beyond which nothing can be foreseen, except hunger and the struggle of hungry people for the ever diminishing supply of goods.

VII

The abstract sociological principle of class struggle, thrown into the Russian masses, was apprehended by them, on the one hand, purely psychologically, as hostility to "the bourgeoisie," to "masters," to "the intelligentsia," to "Kadets," to "junkers," to women in "hats" and such categories which make no sense in terms of production and economics. On the other hand, as a directive of social or political action, it was apprehended in a purely pogrom-like, mechanical way, as a slogan of destruction, insult, and robbery of the "bourgeoisie." Therefore the organizing significance of the idea of class struggle in the Russian revolution was, and continues to be, insignificant; its destructive significance was, and continues to be, immeasurable. Thus the two basic ideas of the recent social movement, the idea of socialism and the idea of class struggle, entered into Russian development, not as organizing creative forces of construction, but only as disintegrating, destructive forces of subversion.

On the one hand, "class" is thought of as a category or rank whose delineation is based on some kind of objective social or economic criterion: occupation (profession, for example, farming); position in the profession (employer, employee, worker); the kind and amount of income received (pay for work, wages, percent on capital, etc., income up to 1,000 rubles, from 1,000 to 2,000 rubles, etc.), and so on. On the other hand, class is thought of as that category

of people whose objective characteristics necessarily correspond to a certain consciousness, or to a persistent mood of practically *all* individuals who belong to the given class. The starting point of the doctrine of class struggle is the notion of the necessary correspondence of an objective group, class in an objective sense, with a psychological unity, that is, with class in a social-spiritual sense. Meanwhile, it is equally important for both the scientific investigator of reality and the practical politician to remember that it is the link between the objective and psychological factors (the presence of this tie, its degree, its character, and real expression) that constitutes the content of the real problem of class divisions and class struggle in history and in politics. The most recent (Marxist) teaching about class struggle, and the phraseology which comes out of it, both operate with a vague notion of class, which does not differentiate between objective and subjective factors, and, therefore, the real problem goes unnoticed. To the degree that the teaching about classes proceeds from the fact of class struggle, as a primary phenomenon, it unconsciously presupposes that to each class, which is a group according to one or another objective criterion, there necessarily corresponds a consciousness of unity, or at least a certain unifying mood of this group, which places it in opposition to other groups.

But consciousness of such unity, as a psychological fact and factor, is a subjective element that may exist in individual consciousness, apart from the presence and degree of ties between itself and objective elements. Therefore, the psychological fact of class consciousness in some individuals may anticipate the correspondence of this consciousness with the social mood of the whole group. And thus it is, in most of those cases where class consciousness, and the class struggle based on it, takes sharp, distinct form. This means that the setting up of a class, as a sociological quantity, occurs by means of the psychological suggestion of a certain class consciousness to a specific objective group of persons, the class as a category. Therefore one may justifiably affirm, not that the presence of a class as an objective category gives rise to class consciousness, but, on the contrary, that the presence of class consciousness objectively constitutes a class as a social-psychological phenomenon and as a sociological quantity. This assertion, which I always develop and illustrate in my lectures on the history of economic life, is only one more expression of the proposition that it is precisely the link (presence, degree, and character of the link) between class as an objective category and class as a social-psychological unity that is the problem of scientific investigation.¹¹ Apart from such a distinction in the concept of class, the teaching about class struggle is a bad publicistic cliché, appropriate only for use by demagogues.

11. As an example of "class" formation which took place before our eyes and which illustrates my basic idea, we may cite the class of so-called "junior (academic) teachers" (I use a suggestion made to me by D. M. Petrushevskii). The *privat-dozents*, assistants,

VIII

On the whole, there is no creative potential that exists or can be seen in the Russian revolution. And this was unavoidable, because in our revolution of 1917 ideas played the role of a chance decoration, an ornamental overlay, on destructive instincts and passions. Socialists (communists) wanted to utilize these instincts and passions as a lever for the realization of their ideals, but the masses adopted the idea of socialism as a sanction for their strivings, not at all wanting to restrict the latter in the name of the ideal.

Thus the most profound inner contradiction inherent in both ideas was revealed: socialism and class struggle, as real social-psychological forces.

On the one hand, the idea of socialism is the idea of a supraindividual structuring of economic life, which demands that the individual subordinates his interests, goals, and actions to the interests, tasks, and vital functioning of the social whole. Socialism, as the idea or principle of a certain social formation, dictates self-limitation to the individual. On the other hand, the conscious or unconscious psychological assumption of socialism, as a mass doctrine of faith, is the realization of individual interests and goals. The pathos of socialism, and especially revolutionary socialism, *for the masses*, lies in the achievement of well-being, and above all the material well-being of individuals; this pathos is purely materialistic, and at the same time individualistic, or atomistic. Thus the real psychological motives of the "socialist" masses lie in profound contradiction to the abstract ideological meaning of socialism, as an idea for the construction of society and the subordination of the individual to the interests of the social whole.

The same must be said about the principle of class struggle. Class is an abstract category which expresses a real psychological content, not at all of a collective, but purely of an individual, stamp. One says, "class struggle," but one means the assertion of individual interests as the real motives and vital

and lab assistants existed for many decades, but only after the revolution of 1905-06 did they, or rather their leaders, recognize themselves as a special social-psychological unity, and stand in opposition to the so-called senior teachers. This is a clear example of social imitation and its role in the process of class differentiation, for there is no doubt that the class or group of junior teachers set itself apart according to the model of other class-professional groupings, and did so, moreover, in conjunction with special purely Russian modes of thought (such a grouping does not exist in the West). In the Middle Ages, the process of subdivision of guilds, and the resulting guild feuds, which are the *formal* occasion for group struggle within other broader groups, illustrates this very same point. The differentiation of guilds rarely corresponded to the differentiation of the industry itself: in the former there was a purely psychological element, which in a certain sense might be characterized as "artificial," the more so since often guild subdivision went back genetically to fiscal considerations of the authorities, which stood above the guilds.

tasks. It is just like a crowd that commits a pogrom. Although it is a collective, perhaps even an organized collective, it proceeds in its pogrom action through individual motives of seizure and enrichment. This is the profound distinction between a crowd committing a pogrom, although it seems to be "organized," and a military unit, welded together, not by the commonality of individual motives, but by the unity of a collective will independent of the person, which is expressed in discipline. This is why the idea of class struggle could lead to the destruction of an army and its discipline, and the destruction of an economic order in a pogrom-like whirlwind, and yet be so pitifully unable and powerless to create even a Red Army and to lay the bases of the economic organization of society on the principle of socialism. This also means that the ideas of socialism and class struggle as revolutionary ideas have strength and authority over the Russian masses only as individual and destructive ideas, but not as collective and creative ones.

This contradiction is inherent in them, this curse hangs over them as revolutionary ideas, for generally the very concept of revolution is a negating, destructive concept, and it simply cannot be solidly linked with constructive potentials, that is, with the construction of life. The construction of life can only be evolutionary and, as collective action, can and must be founded on the stimulation, not of individual, but of collective motives. However paradoxical this appears at first glance, "bourgeois" society and "bourgeois" social forms (the state, military, the church, etc.) are imbued much more with a spirit of collectivism (if you will, socialism) and express much more the principle of socialization and collective action, than militant revolutionary socialism, which is deeply imbued with materialism and individualism (atomism). This is the same distinction that exists between external war and civil war. The first unites classes and individuals in a common action; it unites them appealing to moral motives, personal self-limitation, and self-sacrifice for the good of the whole. The second divides classes, denying the whole and the solidarity of its parts. But since, in practice, class is a purely psychological and subjective concept (Lenin and Rakovskii belong to the class of proletarians only because psychologically they assign themselves to it), then the line between persons of different classes is drawn according to their feelings; people recognize themselves as belonging to different classes in proportion to their mutual hostility. Classes are created by the hostile feelings of individuals, and therefore civil war divides society, making its members enemies among themselves.

IX

In principle, the concept of nation is essentially the same kind of category as the concept of class. Membership in a nation is determined, above all, by some kind of objective criteria, for the most part language. But, for the for-

mation and existence of a nation, decisive significance rests in that unifying mood which is expressed in national consciousness, and which creates a certain spiritual unity out of a group of persons of a single origin, a single faith, a single language, and so on. A nation is constituted and created by national consciousness.

There is no doubt that the Russian revolution is the first example in universal history of the triumph of internationalism and the class idea over nationalism and the national idea. I say "internationalism" and "class idea," and quite consciously place these concepts on the same level. Internationalism may be of two types: peaceful or pacifist internationalism, which calls the nations to reconciliation and unification in the name of some higher unity; and militant or class internationalism, which calls for the division of the world, not into nations, but into classes hostile to each other. The first form of internationalism may be evaluated variously, according to its concrete manifestations and strivings. In principle, it poses for itself a great moral task, and, according to spiritual content, the highest form of such internationalism was Christianity, with its ideal of universal church unity. The methods of this internationalism are the preaching of the spirit of love and the brotherhood of people in Christ. Political and social goals, in and of themselves, are completely foreign to it.

Militant class internationalism has a different sense. It is organically linked with the idea of class struggle and the mood of civil war. External war, as I have already said, is distinguished from civil war in its very essence; according to their moral sense these two forms of war are directly contradictory. External war unites those persons who belong to one and the same people; civil war, which is only a heightened expression of class struggle, divides them. External war is limited in time, one way or another it must have an end; civil war in any form is thought of as something continual, or at least extended. Why has the idea of class struggle so easily commanded the soul of the Russian people and devastated Russian life? This is explained by several long-standing moral vices rooted in our people, by inter-class and inter-personal mistrust and ill will, which often flared up into hatred. The revolution broke the old links in the Russian people that united persons—national, state, and religious links; and it did not create any new ones in their place. The idea of class struggle, in the Russian social context, turned out to be only a disintegrating and destructive force, not a rallying and unifying one.

Russia and the Russian people have come to know international socialism that rests on the idea of class struggle; they have experienced it now in practice. It led to destruction of the state, to the greatest human hatred, and to a rejection of everything that raises individual man above the image of a beast.

This negative school passed through by the Russian people in the revolutionary era, at the same time, provides it with positive lessons, and places creative tasks before the national spirit. These positive lessons and creative tasks must be converted into a vital cause.

X

The vital cause of our time and of future generations must be shaped under the banner and in the name of the *nation*. The nation, as I have already said, is formally a concept like that of class. National consciousness forms the nation, just as class consciousness forms the class. The nation is a spiritual unity, created and supported by a community of culture and a spiritual content bequeathed by the past, alive in the present, and in the making for the future. But, whereas the class criterion is tied down to a meager social and economic content, which has neither moral or any other kind of spiritual value, the national criterion indicates that entire great and imperishable wealth which is possessed by any member and participant in the nation, and which, in essence, comprises the very concept of the nation. "At the basis of the nation always rests a cultural community in the past, the present, and the future, and a common cultural heritage, common cultural work, and common cultural aspirations."¹²

Thus, all of our future tasks join together and come down to one: the education of individuals and the masses in the national spirit. This task is an educational task, but all genuine education (and self-education) is, not only preparation for life, but also life itself and a life activity. Therefore, the task of which I speak is not simply some kind of preparatory work; it has vital, and thus decisive, significance. The Russian nation and its culture are the elemental products of our hard and brutal history.

Today the nation must become the lovingly and consciously creative element of our existence, the lofty value from which we must go forth, as from a standard, and to which countless generations of Russian people must rally. In order to clear a place for the loving, conscious creation of a national culture, Russian educated people must first of all liberate themselves in their spiritual existence from that false ideal whose destructive effect on the national soul and national life is now finally recognized. This false ideal is international socialism, based on class. Along with this, they must get rid of their worship of any particular political and social forms. Neither the class interests of the international proletariat, nor any political or social forms (for example, republic, commune, socialism), may lay claim to any recognition of higher ideals or values. National culture is not subordinate to any class interests, and may not be locked into any definite political or social form. The place of any class in national life is determined by its participation in national

12. See *Patriotica*, p. 103, where in clarification of these thoughts I note: "This was clear even in classical antiquity, where Hellenism was a broad, national idea, not limited to the framework of the state. Isocrates linked the very idea of Hellenic culture (*paideusis*) with successes 'in thought and speech': 'By Hellenes we mean those who partake in our culture, rather than those who have a common origin with us.'"

culture, and any political and social form, in order to be justified in history, must show itself in the given historical circumstances to be the best receptacle for national culture, that is, for the spiritual content whose significance and meaning goes beyond any class frameworks and surpasses any political and social forms.

There is one advantage to the fact that the Russian revolution went to extremes in its destructive actions. It put an end to the power of socialism and politics over the minds of Russian educated people. On the ruins of Russia, before the countenance of the profaned Kremlin and the destroyed Iaroslav cathedrals, I say to every Russian youth: it doesn't matter to Russia whether you believe in socialism, the republic, or the commune; but it is important to Russia that you respect the greatness of its past, that you hope for and demand greatness for its future, so that the piety of Sergius Radonezhskii, the audacity of Metropolitan Philip, the patriotism of Peter the Great, the heroism of Suvorov, the poetry of Pushkin, Gogol', and Tolstoi, the self-sacrifice of Nakhimov, Kornilov, and all the millions of Russians, landlords and peasants, rich and poor, who have dauntlessly, uncomplainingly, and selflessly died for Russia, be sacred for you. For Russia was created and sustained by those sacred ones, as a living collective personality and as a spiritual force. Only by them, by their spirit and their power, can we also regenerate Russia. In this sense Russia's past, and only its past, is the guarantee of the future. On that heap of ashes into which the fanaticism of socialist leaders and the raging of the masses they deceived have transformed a great country, only the national idea in conjunction with national passion will give birth to vital forces. This is that idea-passion which must become the vow of every Russian person. All Russian life must be imbued with it and with its creed, from now on. It must take possession of the feelings and will of Russian educated people and, once it has been welded solidly to the entire spiritual content of their existence, it must be realized in sustained everyday work. If there is a Russian "intelligentsia," as an aggregate of educated people, able to create ideals for itself and to act upon them, and if there is within this "intelligentsia" any kind of obligation before the people, then, that obligation consists in bringing to the broad masses, with passion and persistence, the national idea, as a healing and organizing force, without which neither the regeneration of the people, nor the re-creation of the state, is possible. This is the whole program of the spiritual, cultural, and political rebirth of Russia, which depends on the ideological education and reeducation of educated people and the masses. I call all whose souls are shaken by the national bankruptcy and worldwide disgrace we have experienced, to the contemplation and realization of this program.

"May all of us Orthodox Christians be in love and in unity. And it would be well for you to remember that which you have in common. . . . And if through our negligence the final destruction befalls the Muscovite state . . . what will be our answer on the terrible day of Christ's judgment"—in these words of

the straightforward *gramota* of the Nizhni-Novgorodians to the Vologdanians in 1612, and in other analogous documents of the Time of Troubles, in entirely different, less complicated, but perhaps no less threatening, historical circumstances, there was already proclaimed to the land and to the people, the saving force of the national idea and of the spiritual and political unification in its name.

With this you will conquer!

August, 1918

S. L. FRANK

De Profundis

The air is cut away before
And closed from behind
Fly, brother, fly! more high, more high!
Or we shall be belated.

—Coleridge

If even several years ago anyone had predicted the depths of degradation into which we have now fallen, and in which we flounder helplessly, no one would have believed him. The gloomiest pessimists never went so far in their predictions, nor approached in their imaginations that final limit of hopelessness to which fate has led us. Seeking the remaining glimmers of hope, one involuntarily tries to find historical analogies in order to derive comfort and faith, and one can scarcely find them. Even in the Time of Troubles, it seems, the decomposition of the country was not so total, nor the loss of national and state will so hopeless, as in our day. And the only appropriate examples that come to mind are the universal events, so ominous and full of biblical horror, of the sudden destruction of great ancient empires. The horror of this spectacle is intensified by the fact that this is not the murder of a great people, but its suicide, the fact that the pernicious spirit of decomposition plaguing the whole country was injected and absorbed in the national organism willingly, in a savage and blind rapture of self-destruction.

If we, cells of this once powerful but now tormented state body, still live physically and morally, then, to a considerable degree, this is that life of inertia which continues to linger on in a dying person and possibly for some time even in a dead body. One recalls the horrible, perverted fantasy of the greatest of the Russian prophets—Dostoevskii. Before the dead in their graves fall silent forever, they live yet awhile, as in half sleep with snatches and glimmers of their former feelings, passions, and vices. The dead, who are almost completely decomposed, from time to time mutter a meaningless “bobok”—the only vestige of their former speech and thought.¹ All the present-day, petty, often nightmarish, and absurd events of our life; all the senseless bustle of these “Sovdeps”

1. Dostoevskii's sketch, “Bobok: Notes of a Certain Man,” appeared in his *Diary of a Writer* for 1873. The original story has a touch of black humor, which is lost in Frank's application of it to the Russian situation of 1918. See F. M. Dostoevsky, *The Diary of a Writer*, trans. Boris Brasol (New York: George Braziller, 1954), pp. 43-57. *Ed.*

and "Excoms"² that at times bear fruitless verbiage, and at times bear only the fruit of blood and destruction; all of these chaotic scraps of speeches, thoughts, and actions, these vestiges of a once powerful Russian state and culture, after the furious dance of revolutionary specters, like the last, dying sparks after a witches sabbath—are these not all the same kind of "bobok"? And if we, suffocating and dying amidst this gloom in our grave, in our anxieties and hopes continue by inertia of thought to mutter about the "testaments of the revolution," about "Bolsheviks," and "Mensheviks," and about the "Constituent Assembly"; if we convulsively cling to pitiful remnants of old ideas, concepts, and ideals, which are dying away in our consciousness; and in the gloom of death take this fruitless and inactive fluttering of feelings, desires, and words for political life—then this too is the same "bobok" of the decomposing dead.

And, yet, the undying, organic craving for real life, that craving for air and light, forces us convulsively to tear loose from the suffocating darkness of the grave, and leads us to regain consciousness from this gravelike stupor and this savage, dream-like, and death-like muttering. If Russia is destined yet to be reborn—a miracle which, despite everything, we want to believe in, more than that, which we are *obliged* to believe in, so long as we are alive—then this rebirth now can only be a genuine resurrection, a rising up from the dead with a new soul toward a completely different, new life. And the first condition of this rebirth must be a total, decisive realization of both the full depths of our fall and its ultimate, authentic, spiritual causes, which are more than the ghostly, fantastic conditions and the kaleidoscopic, senseless chain of fragmentary events of this fall that have surrounded us since the moment we lost the ground from under our feet. Like the drowning person who still tries to come to the surface, we must renounce the dizzying, stupefying underwater cloud and *force* ourselves to understand where we are, and how, and why, we fell into this abyss. And even if we are truly fated to perish, even then, the spirit of life leads us to perish, not in a dreamlike fading of thought and will, but with a clear conscience, having transmitted to the ages and the peoples the distinct warning voice of those who are perishing, and with a pure, deeply realized contrition. With the force of free thought and conscience—which no external miseries, oppression, or arbitrary rule can take away from us—we must transcend the passing moment to understand and evaluate the nightmarish present in conjunction with our entire past, not in the blinking, roving lights of the marsh miasma, but in the constant, eternal illumination of human and national life.

II

It would appear that the diabolic hallucination which befell us is already ending, and the cock that dispels the witches sabbath on Bald Mountain has long since crowed. But we have not yet entirely regained our senses; we stand

as if spellbound, and do not understand from where this hallucination came. We already understand well that the whirlwind encircling us since March of last year was not an upsurge of creative political forces, but that it brought only destruction, plastered our eyes with the muck and dust dredged up from the low places of life, and was topped off with the destructive pandemonium of all the spirits of death, evil, and decay. But we are still not able to understand how all this happened, and it still seems that somehow, independent of our will and contrary to it, a terrible substitution of evil for good took place. For the first time, the country became truly free to fulfill its cherished ideals; the best Russian people came to power, and even better, more energetic and ardent people prodded them toward the realization of desired goals. And suddenly, somehow, all this caved in, and we woke up at a broken basin,³ worse than that, without any basin and even without the old ramshackle hut, that despite everything, had been dear to our heart. And in spite of the dreadful signs and divine retributions, the thoughts of most people still cling to petty, external, and totally illusory explanations, trying to place responsibility on some unforeseen forces and causes not dependent on us, but on someone and something else. They do not see the link that exists between the manifestation of Russian social consciousness and its very essence.

The simple, prevailing explanation of what happened, now reached by our middling "repentant" Russian intelligentsia, consist of blaming it on the "lack of preparation of the people." According to this explanation, because of its ignorance and lack of education in matters of state, for which in the final analysis that same "old regime" was to blame, "the people" proved incapable of adopting and carrying out the beautiful reforms conceived by the revolutionary intelligentsia, and with its crude, clumsy behavior ruined "the country and the revolution." Thought through to its conclusion, of course, this explanation contains the most brutal and destructive critique of the entire political practice of our revolutionary and radical parties. What kind of politicians are these, who, in their programs and their mode of action, deal with some kind of imagined, ideal people, and not with the people as it really exists! Nonetheless, even with all the logical consequences that stem from it, this explanation remains superficial, extremely one-sided, and therefore theoretically untrue. As an attempt at self-justification, it is morally false. Of course, the people celebrated for its righteousness, showed its real moral temper to such an extent that any inclination toward *narodnik* deification of the lower classes will long be deterred. But, in spite of everything, and apart from any false sentimentalism in relation to "the people," one may say that the people, in the sense of the lower classes or, in general, the masses of the population, may never be directly

3. Reference to the "broken basin" is not an obvious one. This basin may have been the Biblical "broken cistern" of Jeremiah 2.13, where the Lord first defines Himself as a spring of living water, and then accuses Israel of hewing out for themselves cracked cisterns that can hold no water. That accusation would fit with Frank's evaluation of Russia in 1918. *Ed.*

guilty of political failure and the disastrous outcome of a political movement, for the simple reason that in no social order, nor in any social circumstances, is the people the initiator and creator of political life. Even in the most democratic state, the people is always the fulfiller, the instrument in the hands of some directing and inspiring minority. This is the simple, unshakable, and universal sociological truth: not an amorphous mass, but only organization can be effective; every organization is founded on the subordination of the majority to the leading minority. Of course, which political organization and what political ideas and methods of action prove to be most influential and powerful, depend on the cultural, intellectual, and moral condition of the broad masses. But the general political outcome that results consequently, is always determined by the *mutual interaction* between the content and level of social consciousness of the masses, and the direction of the ideas of the leading minority.

Applying this abstract sociological axiom to the current Russian reality, we must say that, for historical reasons, a significant amount of anarchist, anti-state, and socially destructive passions and instincts did accumulate in the masses. But at the beginning of the revolution, as always, great forces of a patriotic, conservative, spiritually healthy, and nationally unifying tendency were alive in those very same masses. The whole course of the so-called revolution consisted of the gradual dying away, the dispersion, and the exhaustion into some kind of politically inactive depth of the people's soul, of forces of this latter kind. This process of gradual displacement of good by evil, of light by darkness in the people's soul, was accomplished under the planned and persistent influence of the leading revolutionary intelligentsia. For all the excess of explosive material accumulated in the people, it took a half year of persistent, frenzied, energetic work of unbridling anarchist instincts, before the people finally lost conscience and understanding of the state, and gave itself over entirely into the power of full blown demagogues, who were bound by nothing. Before they can blame the people for its incapacities, members of the weak-nerved and weak-minded socialist intelligentsia, displaced by these demagogues, must recall all of their own activity directed toward the destruction of the state and civil discipline of the people, toward the trampling in the mud of the very idea of patriotism, and toward the unbridling, under the name of the worker and agrarian movement, of the bloodthirsty instincts and class hatred in the masses. They must recall, in general, all the bedlam of irresponsible phrases and slogans that preceded the post-October bedlam of actions and found logical and direct embodiment in them. And if these former inspirers of revolution now blame the people for the fact that it was not able to value their noble "defensism," and preferred base "defeatism," or for the fact that the people confused the pure ideal of socialism, as a distant, radiant, dream of human justice, with the idea of immediate, personal robbery, then the impartial observer—in this case even one in no way inclined to think the people innocent—recognizes that the guilt of the people is not so great and, in human terms, is completely understandable. Popular passion in its straightforwardness, in its sensi-

tivity to an effective, strong-willed base of ideas, simply took away a thin layer of illusory intellectualizing and morally groundless, tactical distinctions from the intelligentsia's slogans. When "defensism" is based on neither living patriotic feelings, nor on the organic idea of the homeland, but is only a cunning tactical device of anti-patriotic internationalism; when the ideal of socialism, to whose unselfish service they call the masses, is founded on the disintegrating idea of class hatred and envy; can one reproach the people for its inability to master these internally contradictory and fundamentally defective clots of the morally and intellectually confused "ideology" of the intelligentsia?

But enough of these attempts of different groups and factions of the socialist intelligentsia to explain the staggering catastrophe of a great state with the fact that the country did not have faith in them and began to undergo treatment not according to prescriptions of their own political concoction, but according to the worse prescription of someone else. These interfactional squabbles and family scores, among all kinds of "Bolsheviks" and "Mensheviks," "left S.R.'s" and "right S.R.'s," however important they may now appear to the delirious consciousness of a perishing people, and however much more misfortune and bloodshed they may cost the tormented homeland, are part of that same sepulchral muttering and floundering from which we must first of all awaken.

We shall pass over in silence, as superficial and not reaching the heart of the matter, those numerous explanations which lay all guilt for the ruin of the homeland on individual persons, on the incapacity, lack of foresight, or unscrupulousness of rulers and influential leaders of political life during the unfortunate "days of freedom." Of course, many fatal errors and crimes were committed, the avoidance of which might have changed the outcome of the whole political movement; and many, too many, of the favorites and chosen ones of Russian society proved to be far from on top of the situation. They did not display the requisite combination of farsightedness in relation to the state, moral decisiveness, and a feeling of moral responsibility. But the very abundance of these errors and crimes of commission and omission show that they were not an inexplicable accumulation of accidents. *Quos vult perdere, dementat*.⁴ This whole long chain of separate, disastrous actions, through which, by degrees, the rapidly developing collapse of Russian statehood took place—the bankruptcy of most of the rulers, the persistence of an order in which the best people are supplanted by the worst, and in which the fatal blindness of public opinion has always supported the worst against the best—all these are only external symptoms of a more general, more deeply rooted, illness of the national organism. This realization does not remove responsibility from the individual persons who, by their position and influence, either infused disease-producing and disintegrating principles into state life with maximum force, or who displayed inadequate seriousness and energy in struggle with

4. "Those he wishes to destroy, he drives mad." *Ed.*

them. But it also places responsibility on all the remaining direct and indirect participants, inspirers, and preparers of this collapse, and it tries to indicate the source of evil in its more general and, therefore, more profound form.

III

A more profound definition of the source of evil which has ruined Russia should be noted in the growing consciousness of the destructiveness of the *socialist idea*, which had seized broad circles of the Russian intelligentsia, and which had leaked out in powerful currents into the masses. Indeed, Russia carried out the kind of grandiose and frightening experiment as to the consequences of the general dissemination and direct, practical application of socialism to life that revealed, not only for us, but evidently also for all of Europe, all the evil, and all the inner moral viciousness of this movement. From the example of our fate, we begin to understand that the only reason why socialism did not reveal its destructive influence in the West, but, on the contrary, to a certain extent contributed to the betterment of the forms of life and to a strengthening of its moral principles, was because this socialism was not only restrained from without by powerful conservative cultural forces, but was also thoroughly permeated by them from within; in short, because this was not pure socialism, in its true essence, but a completely bourgeois, state, non-socialist socialism. With us, in the absence of all external and internal obstacles and alien admixtures, and with our tendency toward the logical simplification of ideas and the straightforward revelation of their active essence, socialism, in its pure form, grew as a lush flower, and abundantly bore its poisonous fruit. Contrary to all the widespread attempts to shade over the ideological acuteness of the present-day conflict, one must recognize openly that it is precisely the most extreme of our socialist parties that most clearly and consistently expresses the essence of socialism—of that revolutionary, mutinous socialism which displayed its vital temper in the 1840s. For, with the subsequent penetration of socialism into the broad masses, and its transformation into a protracted party movement within the framework of European bourgeois statehood, the clarity and the sharpness of expression of this vital temper gradually shaded and softened. So-called “scientific socialism” already contained an irreconcilable duality between a destructive, mutinous denial of the cultural and social ties of European society, and a broadly tolerant, in essence conservative, scientific, and evolutionary attitude toward these ties. The subsequent watering down of socialism into a peaceful economic and political movement of improving the fate of the working class, left little more of the anti-national, anti-state, and purely destructive essence of socialism, than empty phraseology, devoid of any real meaning. Conquering outwardly, socialism in the West was rendered harmless and was conquered from within by the assimilating and educative strength of a long-standing state, moral, and scientific culture. Here, where socialism actually conquered all opposition and became the ruling poli-

tical mind-set of the intelligentsia and the masses, its victory led unavoidably to the destruction of the state and to the destruction of the social ties and cultural forces on which statehood is based.

It is impossible to counter this understanding of the reasons for our catastrophe with the view, similar to the current explanation examined above, that in essence the Russian masses are not at all prepared for the reception of socialism, and in spirit are not at all socialist. Of course, our workers did not strive toward socialism, but simply toward a freer life, toward an enormous increase of their income and the greatest possible reduction of their labor. Our soldiers refused to fight, not from the idea of internationalism, but only as weary people, alien to the idea of duty to the state, who did not think about the homeland and the state, but only about their village, which is far away and which the "Germans will never reach." This was especially true of the peasants, who so unexpectedly turned into S.R.'s and divided the land, not from faith in the truth of socialism, but from possession by the savage cupidity of a property owner. All of this is factually indisputable, but the strength of this view is countered by a more profound explanation of the very moral and psychological essence of socialism. For this inner falsehood, this disparity between the greatness of the ideas and the coarseness of the real motives concealed by them, which so dramatically and with exaggerated sharpness were revealed in our situation, necessarily derives from the very essence of socialism. Revolutionary socialism which affirms the possibility of establishing justice and happiness on earth by the mechanical means of political overturn and coercive "dictatorship"; socialism which is founded on the teaching of the supremacy of economic interests and class conflict and which sees the single source of every evil in the self-interests of the upper classes, and the holy force which creates good and justice in the essentially similar self-interests of the lower classes—this socialism bears in itself the immanent necessity of universal social hypocrisy and the consecration of base profit motives with the moral pathos of nobility and disinterestedness. And, therefore, even here, one must not minimize the significance of a purely ideological and supraindividual principle. We have been destroyed, not only by the lower, earthly, egoistical passions of the masses, for these passions are present in the majority of people under any conditions, and in spite of everything, are restrained by the countervailing forces of the religious, moral, cultural, and social order. We have been destroyed precisely by the unbridling of these passions through inoculation with the ideological poison of socialism, by artificially working the masses up to the degree of fanatical frenzy and possession, and by the artificial moral-legal atmosphere, which gave them freedom and impunity. The undisguised, naked evil of crude desires can never become a powerful historical force; it becomes such a force only when it begins to tempt people with the false appearance of good and an unselfish idea.

Thus, there is no doubt that revolutionary socialism, in its pure, unmitigated, or unneutralized essence, turned out to be a poison for us, which, being absorbed by the national organism, was incapable of producing the corresponding

antidote and led to mortal illness, to the gangrenous decomposition of the mind and heart of the Russian state. A full recognition of this fact is the essential and necessary feature of that repentant self-knowledge, outside of which there is no salvation for us. The destructiveness of socialism, in the final analysis, is preconditioned by its materialism—by its denial of the only truly creative and unifying forces of society—namely, the organic, inner, spiritual forces of social existence. Internationalism is a denial and mocking of the organizing spiritual force of nationality and national statehood, a denial of the very idea of law as a principle of supraclass and supraindividual justice and objectivity in social relations. It is a lack of understanding of the dependence of material and moral progress on the inner spiritual fitness of man, on his cultural upbringing in personal and social life; it is a mechanical and atomistic view of society, as an area of purely external conflict of disconnected, egoistical forces. Such are the main negative and destructive motives of this materialism. Insofar as it is possible to contemplate the spectacle of the destruction of one's own country, from the point of view of a purely scientific curiosity, we may see it as a grandiose experiment in reduction to the absurd of the materialistic understanding of historical life. For here we plainly see that practical materialism, in the absence of the self-sufficient forces of spiritual order, is a factor, not of existence and development of the society, but only of its ruin and destruction.

But in one regard this diagnosis of the source of our mortal illness is still inadequate, and does not penetrate sufficiently deep: it does not explain why, in Russia, socialism became such an all-subduing temptation, and why the national organism did not display the appropriate force of self-preservation, in order to neutralize this poison or to purge itself of it. This brings us to the more profound and gripping question of the general weakness in Russia of the spiritual principles that protect and strengthen the general culture and state unity of the nation.

IV

This question presents itself first of all on a purely political plane. Why did all the non-socialist, so-called "bourgeois," parties in Russia—that is, all political forces directed toward the strengthening and preservation of state unity, social order, and moral and legal discipline—prove to be so weak? Putting aside all the variations of purely temporary party political groupings, which from a more profound historical point of view were accidental and immaterial, one may say that for a long time two powerful political parties existed in Russia: a liberal progressive party; and a conservative party. Both, as is well-known, in the most troubled moment of the collapse of the Russian state, proved to be completely powerless.

The powerlessness of the liberal party, which doubtlessly included a majority of the most cultured, enlightened, and talented Russian people, is now often explained by its inexperience in matters of state. Without going into a detailed

evaluation of this explanation, we must admit that it is clearly inadequate. In moments of abrupt political change, history knows not a few instances of successful state activity by elements, which up to that time had no experience in state affairs. Before the revolution, Cromwell and his followers were scarcely more experienced in the area of state life than our liberals.

The basic and ultimate cause of the weakness of our liberal party consists in a purely spiritual factor: in its lack of a self-sufficient and positive *social world view*, and as a consequence of this, in its inability to ignite that political *pathos* which generates the magnetic force of every powerful political party. Our liberals and progressives, in their prevailing majority, are in part cultural and state-enlightened socialists, that is, they fulfill in Russia—a country almost devoid of corresponding elements in the masses—the function of moderate West European socialists. And in part they are half-socialists, that is, people who see the ideal in half of the negating program of socialism, but disagree on its full realization. In both cases, the defense of the principles of statehood, law, and general culture turns out not to be deeply enough based, having significance more as a tactical device than as a clear principle. It would not be philosophically doctrinaire to say that the weakness of Russian liberalism is the weakness of any *positivism* and *agnosticism* in the face of *materialism*, or, what is the same thing, the weakness of a nihilism which is careful and sensitive to life's complexities, in the face of a nihilism which is direct, completely blind, and therefore reckless. Only great positive ideas have organizing force—ideas containing independent insight, and igniting faith in their independent and primary value. In Russian liberalism, faith in the value of the spiritual principles of the nation, the state, law, and freedom remains philosophically unexplained and religiously uninspired. In general, how long has it been since ideas of the native land, the state, and order have appeared to the Russian liberal social consciousness as *positive* ideas? For the majority—scarcely earlier than the beginning of this war, which with its dreadfulness opened the eyes even of the half-blind, and, despite all their usual beliefs, required them simply and directly to realize the danger of hostility to these ideas. But it is still a long way from such a crudely empirical realization of the value of these principles to a rational understanding of their significance, and even further—to a vital spiritual consideration of their primary and fundamental meaning in social life. This is why, in struggling with the destructive nihilism of the socialist parties, Russian liberalism could only dream of convincing its opponent with logical argument, and references to common sense and political experience. Russian liberalism continued to see its opponent as a rather irrational ally, but was not able to light the fire of religious indignation against his destructive acts, nor to collect and strengthen a vital social host for his effective uprooting. That which is currently called the “state inexperience” of the Russian liberal intelligentsia, in reality, consists, not in the absence of appropriate *technical* knowledge, ability, and experience—which in significant degree it had already acquired in local government and parliamentary activity—but in the absence of vital

moral experience, in relation to a series of basic, positive principles of state life. Right up to the present, our liberalism was penetrated with purely negative motives and was foreign to positive state activity. Its prevailing mood was to sulk, in the name of abstract moral principles, against authority and the existing order of rule, without a vital consciousness of the tragic difficulties and responsibilities of all authority. The severe verdict of Dostoevskii, in essence, is correct: "Our entire liberal party *by-passed the cause*, taking no part in it and not touching it; it only denied and sniggered." Like the socialists, the liberals considered all who were governed as good, and only the rulers—as evil. Like the socialists, they did not recognize, or did not adequately recognize, the dependence of all authority on the spiritual and cultural level of society, and consequently, the responsibility of a society for its authority. Like the socialists, they had too much faith in the ease with which mechanical, external reforms of a purely negative character could be fulfilled, and in the curative power of the simple liberation of the people from the external oppression of authority. And they too little understood the necessity and difficulty of the organic re-education of society toward a new life. Their political realism was weakened by their completely unrealistic moral sentimentalism, their absence of feeling for the deepest, and therefore most important, spiritual roots of reality, for the inner forces of good and evil in social life, and for the power of the subterranean, organic principles of religiosity and the ancient, cultural-historical, vital feelings and experience. And again, involuntarily, one recalls the words of Dostoevskii: "Realism which sees no further than the end of its nose, is more dangerous than the most mindless fanaticism, because it is blind."

That the conservative forces of Russian society proved powerless in the moment of revolution, in a certain sense, is in the order of things and stems from the very essence of revolution. However, perhaps in no other place did the conservative strata, which had held authority for decades or centuries, reveal such a degree of weakness, lose influence so suddenly, irrevocably, and easily, as with us. And when you think through this important problem of the exceptional weakness of Russian conservatism, then, behind the various manifestations of its immediate historical and social conditions and forms of expression, you sense its certain, primary, spiritual cause. Russian conservatism rested on a series of ancient habits of feeling and belief, on a traditional style of life, in a word, on the forces of historical inertia. But long ago it had lost the vital spiritual and moral roots of its existence and did not feel the need to strengthen them in the country, or, at least, it did not understand all the responsibility and complexity of this task, the entire, essential, organic character of such a spreading of roots in the depths of the people's soul. Russia had not a few morally and intellectually deep, spiritually gifted, conservative thinkers and doers—one need only recall our Slavophiles. But they remained superfluous and powerless individuals, because the prevailing conservatism did not wish to use them, and shunned them precisely because they were bearers of vital ideas that would rouse social consciousness. Russian conservatism,

which officially relied on, and abstractly dreamt of relying on, a definite religious faith and national-political ideology, weakened and rendered itself barren, with its factual disbelief in, and distrust of, the vital force of spiritual creativity.

The most notable and tragic fact of contemporary Russian political life, which indicates a very profound and general feature of our national soul, consists in the inner similarity between the moral temper of the typical Russian conservative and the revolutionary: an identical misunderstanding of the organic, spiritual basis of social life; and identical love of mechanical measures of external coercion and severe punishment; the very same combination of hatred for living persons and romantic idealization of abstract political forms and parties. Just as the noble and dreamy idealism of Russian progressive social thought fostered the fanatic coerciveness of revolutionism, and proved to be powerless before it, so too the spiritually more profound and entirely noble idealism of true conservatism gave birth only to the fanatical coerciveness of the "Black Hundreds." "Black Hundreds" despotism of the higher classes and "Black Hundreds" anarchism of the lower classes is one and the same force of evil, which consistently expressed itself in two different, but profoundly related forms, and which, in Russia, has weakened both truly spiritual conservatism, and the true liberalism that is indissolubly linked to it. A single spirit of evil and coercion, unbelief and materialism in these two manifestations ripped the roots of the popular soul out of the only nourishing soil which guarantees the vital growth of national strength and life—out of the stratum of subterranean creative spirituality—and thereby dried up the spirit and body of the people, weakened its inner unity, and made it powerless before the first storm that descended upon it. And it may be that, at the present moment, the question of the future form of rule in Russia, insofar as it is destined to recover, by itself has no more significance than the question about the cut of the garment in which one who is dying dresses himself in case of his recovery. If this is so, then—even though the cruelest reaction would be psychologically natural, after all that has happened—it cannot be overemphasized that the replacement of politically-red black hundredism, in a restoration, with the same black hundredism of a politically black hue would not be the recovery of the one who is dying, but merely another form of the former mortal illness. It is true that the national consciousness, even now, will never forget that Russian conservatism, whatever else is said, once created a great state, and that Russian revolutionism quickly ruined it. But it also will not forget that the poison of this revolutionism was worked out in the depths of that same conservatism, through its moral decomposition, and that this decomposed conservatism not only failed to produce any kind of adequate antidote, but that, on the contrary, all its energies went to the strengthening of the poison itself.

V

Recognizing that the source of this ruin dates back fully to the period of the "old regime," the fact that Russia did not regenerate after the revolution as everyone dreamed it would—but, on the contrary, perished in the process of revolution—must necessarily alter our prevailing understanding of the conditions and sources of national happiness and unhappiness, of the flowering and ruin of the state. Today, one must recognize that it is not the political forms of life as such which define good and evil in national life, but the vital moral spirit of the people which penetrates them. The genius Pushkin once characterized Russia with the bitter words: "One must admit that our public life is very sad. This absence of public opinion; this indifference to all obligations, to justice and truth; this cynical disdain of thought and of human dignity; really leads to despair." If superficial liberalism always viewed these words as a condemnation of a specific period, of a specific political structure, or social stratum, then, after hard experience, we are now convinced of a much more profound meaning of these words, one that is above time and politics. Soldiers who ran from war and who sold weapons and shells to the enemy, expressed in any case no less indifference to duty than the *chinovniks* of Nicholas I; revolution uncovered no less cynical disdain for thought and for human dignity than reaction; and, public opinion in democratic Russia proved to be no stronger than in imperial, class Russia. It is not any institution, form of government, or order of social life that is the final and ultimate cause of well-being and power in a country, or of its poverty and weakness. Therefore, any of the political parties, and their programs and manner of action, are only symptoms and forms of the manifestation of the forces that direct the national destiny, rather than independent creators of this destiny. That evil we observed in the popularity of extreme revolutionary socialism, in the spiritual flabbiness and short-sightedness of Russian liberalism, and in the absence of spiritually vital and morally enlightened conservatism, must now be traced to its original source.

The destiny of a nation is determined by forces or factors of two types; the force of the collective organization of life and social relations, of the common historical conditions and the variations of national *existence*; and the force of beliefs, of moral ideas and values, which are rooted in the national *consciousness*. In a close examination of a given moment of historical life, forces of both these types are found in close mutual interaction and interrelation, and neither of them may be taken separately from the other. But, in some depth of the national soul or the national character, both of these forces have a single root in a certain *primary life feeling* and *common spiritual-moral image* of the people. For our purposes—for the moral self-knowledge of the national spirit—there is no need, therefore, to dwell on the concrete historical, economic, governmental, and international conditions that serve as the expressors, bearers, and facilitators of this moral spirit on the plane of collective existence and external, historical life. It is enough to refer to these factors of belief and moral

ideas in order to sense the very essence of this primary, social life feeling, and to find in it the source of our national illness.

And here, first of all, it is essential to note that the manifestation of the illness, which so violently and sharply came to light in the whirlwind of troubles in the last year, and which more perceptive observers had already noticed in the movement of 1905-06, had already been displayed for some time, in less noticeable and more chronic form, during almost the entire course of the nineteenth century. Nihilism, which flared up with such shattering force in recent years, and so radically accomplished the task worthy of its name—the transformation of Russia into *nothing*, almost into a mere geographic expression—this nihilism grew and developed steadily over the whole previous century. If, in a period of revolution, we witnessed the terrifying fall in the level of public opinion, the fall with dizzying speed of all the best and the elevation of all the worst, then the perceptive observer sees in this vortex merely the final, swift, and narrow circle of that spiritual maelstrom which had long since seized us. Over the course of almost the entire nineteenth century, not the best and creative, but rather the worst, the most crude, primitive, and destructive of intellectual tendencies became firmly established in public opinion. Of course, our Slavophiles were spiritually more profound and fruitful than the Westerners who replaced them, just as the Westerners of the 1840s were more significant, cultured, and spiritually rich than the radicals of the 1860s. Great Russian sages, like Pushkin, Tiutchev, Dostoevskii, K. Leont'ev, VI. Solov'ev, suffocated in a surrounding atmosphere of philistine and trivial public opinion. The successful Western influences in Russia were always the more trivial tendencies, and, moreover, specifically the negative and destructive ones. Positivism, materialism, socialism—these were the main fruits of our intercourse with Western Europe, at any rate, beginning with the 1840s; but anarchism in significant measure was a direct creation of the Russian spirit; while such phenomena as Christian socialism, the teachings of Carlyle or Ruskin, the national and religious movements in the West found no echo in Russia. The Russian intelligentsia did not value and did not understand the profound spiritual and social insight of Dostoevskii, and it did not even notice the genius of Konstantin Leont'ev, while the feeble, moralistic preaching of Tolstoi, which simplified and levelled everything, had a vital influence and, in significant degree, prepared those cadres of negators of the state, homeland, and culture who destroyed Russia before our eyes. That seminarian at Nekrasov's funeral who, it is said, proclaimed that Nekrasov was above Pushkin, foretold and symbolically prepared the fatal fact that forty years later Lenin was recognized above Guchkov and Miliukov (*toutes proportions gardées*).⁵ And did not all intellectual Russia applaud the cynical, boorish rebelliousness of Gor'kii's barefoot tramps and "creatures who once were men," who twenty years after his noisy success in literature succeeded in seizing power and destroying the Russian state? And

5. "Due consideration being made." *Ed.*

perhaps the most profound and general indicator of this chronic and serious moral illness of the Russian national spirit is the frightening social powerlessness and degradation of the Russian Church—that Church which once, not only had its great saints and manifested great spiritual creativity, but also, with its moral force, contributed to the unification of the Russian people and its salvation from the Tatar yoke and from the collapse of the Time of Troubles.

VI

But the very understanding of the uniqueness of this moral illness is a recognition that the Russian nation is not a nation destitute of spirit and deprived of creative riches. It is rather a nation which, despite its uninterrupted, powerful, spiritual creativity, going right up to our own day, has simply lost its capacity to utilize its riches and, in its social existence, has cast these riches to the wind, and has given preference to the worst over the best, to evil over good. This recognition must lead to a true and morally fruitful diagnosis of the illness. The terrible catastrophe of our national existence, of course, may easily give birth to hopelessness and despair in our souls; and already voices of unbelief are heard, which affirm that the spirit of the Russian nation is finally destroyed, and that from now on it may only serve as fertilizer for other healthier and stronger cultures. This unbelief is not only premature and morally inadmissible, being tantamount to a refusal to struggle with illness and an acceptance of national suicide, it is also purely theoretical, a too summary and, therefore, superficial explanation. The true essence of our national illness and the very terrible crisis we live through, is not the fact that the national organism has lost its spiritual forces and lost its capacity to produce the vital inner energies which nourish the national body and give inner health, unity, and proportion to life. It is rather that these energies remain unused, remain in a powerless, potential state, that is, that the force which had emitted them out to the entire organism, and thereby insured its normal and constant functioning, is paralyzed. However profound and serious our illness, in spite of everything, it is only a functional disorder, and not an organic gangrene.

How and why did it happen that the people (understanding “people” not in a class but a national sense), called a God-bearing people, became a nihilist people, blasphemously trampling on all its sacred relics? How did it happen that a people, justly famous for its moral gentleness and purity, become a murdering people, a people of unconcealed cupidity, and of all kinds of moral dissipation? It is difficult to specify *why* this occurred, but perhaps it is possible to note how it occurred. For many years now a fundamental crack has been developing in our national feelings toward life, a dichotomy between faith and life. Russian religious consciousness gradually retired from life and out of life; it studied and taught how to endure and to suffer, but not how to struggle and create life. All the best forces of the Russian spirit came to be spent on suffering and tribulation, on passivity and on inactive dreaminess.

And parallel to this, all the effective life-creating energy of the national will became spiritually unenlightened, morally unbridled, transforming itself into the rowdiness of evil passions and fruitless, negative, rational theorizing. The Russian religious spirit has long since ceased to strengthen the people morally in its everyday working life, to infuse its mundane economic and legal relations with moral forces. And, therefore, the basically healthy, realistic instincts of the people tore away from the spiritual root of life and started to find satisfaction in disbelief, in purely negative libertinism, that is, in the unruliness of thought and feeling. Everything that was better, noble, and spiritually profound became dreamy and powerless, and everything that was strong and practically effective—became dark and evil. The sentimental, dreamy powerlessness of the Russian intelligentsia, as it strove toward good, and the destructive energy of the moral corruption of reactionary and revolutionary Black Hundredism, are similar indicators of this sick bifurcation of the Russian national spirit, like the passive gentleness, inactivity, and defenselessness of a good Russian peasant, and his capacity for the dark frenzy of pogroms and *Pugachevism*. Russian idealism, in all the forms and spheres in which it appears, lacks moral seriousness, strong-willed determination, a steadfast feeling of responsibility for life, and understanding of the tragic difficulty of realizing ideals, and the ability to overcome these difficulties. And, conversely, the strong-willed energy of the Russian people lacks the ennobling and enlightening consciousness of the spiritual bases of life, the pacifying and sobering understanding of the limited significance of all the external changes in life, and their necessary connection with the inner cultural and moral resources of national life and with the organic roots of the national soul.

This understanding of the spiritual source of our illness indicates, if not the path, then the goal and the direction of the necessary and—we trust—still possible regeneration. This task might have been defined purely ethically, as the awakening of spiritually wise and enlightening *manliness*—not of destructive daring, not of purely negative arbitrariness and dissociation, but of creative manliness, based on a humble recognition of its dependence on higher forces and its rootedness in them. As regards personal culture, we lack the spirit of religiously enlightened activity—the true spirit of chivalry. From the social and philosophical side, this ideal may be understood as a rebirth of the Slavophile dream of an organic development of a spiritual and social culture out of the deep historical roots of the national, religious, and social understanding of life—the dream which Dostoevskii later defined in the concept *pochvennost'*. True, even among the Slavophiles, this ideal was poisoned and weakened with romantic dreaminess, and sentimental misunderstanding of the difficulty and responsibility of its realization in the everyday conditions of political and economic reality. But essentially it is just this idea that marks the only healthy and recuperative direction of social and political thought and will. All of our life and thought must be nourished by the spirit of a true, lofty realism—that realism which recognizes the spiritual bases of social existence, and therefore incorpo-

rates into itself, and does not oppose to itself, the creative idealism of inner perfection. For this realism, the social ideal must not be a contrived, abstract idea, which torn from life forces its way into life from the outside and distorts it, but only a vital, striving force, which arises organically from life itself and from the movement of national consciousness—a force which is capable of creating the new, only because it is secure in the old, and irrevocably linked with it. In institutions, customs, and ways of life that have a historical past, it sees, not an evil which must and can be mechanically removed and equally mechanically replaced by new forms of life conceived in a given generation, but a manifestation and signs of the moral and spiritual past of a people, which may change and develop only through organic re-education and the inner perfecting of national will and thought. It sees the path to the development of culture, not in negation and levelling, not in simplification and rationalization, but, on the contrary, in loving, attentive, and careful preservation and development of the entire organic complexity and fullness of historical forms of life. Therefore, it sees this development only in the concrete historical and collective entities of the nation, the state, and the church, which organically spring up from the national faith and will. It sees a manifestation of the true national will only in those spontaneous forms of life which are not artificially created, but which take form and grow historically, that is, in the manifestation of the genuine ideal of *democracy*, seen as the inner founding of social relations and political structure on the vital spirit, concrete needs, and ideal strivings of the people. It sees political activity for the separate individual, as for the whole people, not as arbitrary, daring, and guided by passing needs of the moment and the generation, but as meek service, defined by faith in the permanent sense of national culture, and as the duty of each generation to preserve the inheritance from its predecessors, to enrich it, and to transmit it to those who come after.

The realization of this ideal of spiritual unity and organic spiritual creativity of the people, this ideal of *religiously conceived and nationally and historically based social and political culture*, of course, presupposes some kind of moral departure from the point of stagnation, some rejection of longstanding habits of illness and persistent ideas of a deranged national soul, in favor of the healthy and necessary habits of normal life, the discovery of a certain forgotten truth—both obvious and simple, like all truth—which is also rich in complex and truly fruitful conclusions. If our social thought and our moral will is able to comprehend all that has occurred, if God's retribution has struck us, not to destroy, but to correct, then this recuperative frame of mind must necessarily mature in our Church-religious and national-state consciousness. Then, from the path of chaos, death, and destruction, we will embark onto the path of creativity, positive development, and self-affirmation of life.

GLOSSARY

ALEXANDER II (Aleksandr Nikolaevich) (1818-81), Russian ruler from 1855 until his assassination by terrorists of the People's Will organization in 1881. His reign witnessed the most significant series of reforms in the nineteenth century: liberation of the serfs, local government, judicial reform, and reform of the military. At the time of his assassination, the "tsar liberator" was considering an advisory role for a representative body in the formation of policy.

ANNA IOANNOVNA (Anna Ivanovna) (1693-1740), the second daughter of Tsar Ivan V Alekseevich. In 1730, she was elevated from obscurity, as Duchess of Kurland, to the throne of Russia by the Supreme Privy Council which placed certain conditions on her nomination. With the support of the lesser gentry, whose interests she favored, Anna reasserted autocratic rule.

AZEV, EVGENII FILIPOVICH (1869-1918), a notorious double agent who combined a leading role in the Battle Organization (terrorist wing) of the Socialist Revolutionary party with services to the Russian secret police, the Okhrana. Unmasked in 1909, he left the movement and fled to Berlin.

BAKUNIN, MIKHAIL ALEKSANDROVICH (1814-76), a Russian revolutionary leader much of whose life was devoted to the international anarchist movement. Influenced by the writings of the German philosophers Fichte and Hegel, Bakunin took a leading role in the discussion circles of the mid and late 1830s in Russia, especially the Stankevich circle. After 1840 much of his life was spent abroad, except for the 1850s when he was imprisoned in Russia or in Siberian exile. His anarchist position was built upon the concept of destruction as a creative urge, and he tended to inspire revolutionary activists in the Russian movement. On the international scene his followers fought for influence with the Marxists in the First International (1864-76).

BATU KHAN (1208-55), commander of the Mongol [Tartar] forces that conquered northeast and south Russia in the years 1237-41 and founder of the Golden Horde in 1243.

BEBEL, AUGUST (1840-1913), a leader of the German Social Democratic Party (SPD) under whose guidance the party survived Bismarck's Anti-Socialist laws to become the strongest single party in Germany. Despite his revolutionary rhetoric, his party assumed the stance of parliamentary opposition, refusing, however, to take part in the conduct of government.

BELINSKII, VISSARION GRIGOR'EVICH (1811-48), a leading critic and journalist whose intellectual pilgrimage led from German idealism to materialism and radical politics. Radical critics based their theories that art should serve a social purpose on his later writings.

BELI, ANDREI (Boris Nikolaevich Bugaev) 1880-1934), a symbolist poet, novelist, and critic, who initially greeted the Russian revolution, then turned from Bolshevism and emigrated in 1921, only to return a few years later.

BERNSTEIN, EDUARD (1850-1932), a German socialist leader whose work *Evolutionary Socialism* (1899), clearly influenced by English Fabianism, gave a theoretical basis for Revisionism in the German Social Democratic Party (SPD). Revisionism stressed the parliamentary path to social reform over Marx's theories of revolution.

BETHMANN-HOLLWEG, THEOBALD VON (1856-1921), who was trained as a lawyer and a Prussian civil servant, became German chancellor in 1909 until forced by military leaders to resign in 1917. His unconditional support of Austria-Hungary in the crisis of July, 1914, is often taken as a major factor in the failure of diplomacy on the eve of World War I.

BLACK HUNDREDS: a term applied by the progressive wing of Russian society to a number of reactionary, extremist organizations in the early twentieth century. The programs of these organizations were most often anti-Semitic; they supported the Church, the monarchy, and extreme nationalism.

BLOK, ALEKSANDR ALEKSANDROVICH (1880-1921), one of Russia's most popular symbolist poets, who believed in the mission of the artist and who greeted the Bolshevik revolution as the opening of a new era, in which the confinements of bourgeois civilization would be overcome.

BOGATYRI: heroes of the old Russian epic poems, the *byliny*. An older cycle of these poems containing heroes symbolic of basic powers of nature are usually considered pre-Kievan. Another cycle containing "younger" heroes is associated with the court of the Kievan Prince Vladimir (978-1015).

BOIAR DUMA: the highest aristocratic council of advisors to the Kievan princes and later the Russian tsars. Generally the Boiar Duma worked together with the tsar in legislation ("The tsar has decreed and the boiars have affirmed"). Influence of the Boiar Duma declined with the growth of absolutism in the late seventeenth century. It was abolished in 1711 under Peter the Great.

BOLSHEVIKS: a faction of the Russian Social Democratic (Marxist) party. Under Lenin's leadership, the Bolsheviks took power in November, 1917, and, after a brief period of cooperation with the left Socialist Revolutionaries, ruled alone in the name of the proletariat.

BREST-LITOVSK [Treaty of], the peace treaty signed by the weak young Soviet state and the Central Powers on 3 March 1918. In the treaty, the Soviets recognized the loss of Finland, the Ukraine, Poland, the Baltic provinces, and parts of White Russia, along with territorial concessions to Turkey, and agreed to pay a large indemnity to Germany.

BUKHAREV, ALEKSANDR MATVEEVICH (Archimandrite Fedor) (1822-71), a religious teacher whose view that secular culture need not be opposed to Christianity led to conflict with the Church hierarchy. He gave up monastic life for the sake of his beliefs.

CHAADAEV, PETR IAKOVLEVICH (1794-1856), a writer who, after retirement as a guards officer, published the *Philosophical Letters*, in 1836, that raised questions of Russia's proper destiny—East or West. From an initial position lamenting Russia's separation from western Catholicism, Chaadaev moved to a view that Russia had an advantage in being able to avoid Europe's mistakes.

CHEKHOV, ANTON PAVLOVICH (1860-1904), moved from medical training to become a popular short story writer and Russia's leading playwright. His works display a rich assortment of personality types and attitudes found in the Russia of his day.

CHERNOV, VIKTOR MIKHAILOVICH (1873-1952), one of the founders of the Socialist Revolutionary party in 1905. During 1917 he led the party, which was deeply split, and served as minister of agriculture in the Provisional Government from May to September. In January, 1918 he was elected chairman of the Constituent Assembly which the Bolsheviks allowed to meet for one day.

CHERNYSHEVSKII, NIKOLAI GAVRILOVICH (1828-89), a radical journalist of the 1850s and 1860s who gained control of *The Contemporary* and, despite the censorship, used it to popularize ideas of philosophical materialism, socialism, and the social utility of art. Arrested in 1862, because of his contacts with the abortive revolutionary movement, he wrote the influential novel, *What Is to be Done?*, while in prison. Spending the rest of his life in prison or exile, he is considered a martyr to the revolutionary cause.

CHINOVNIK: a person holding a rank (*chin*) in the Table of Ranks established by Peter the Great in 1722 to define the hierarchy of military officers and civil servants. By the end of the Imperial period, the term was often used in the pejorative sense of petty bureaucrat.

CHKHEIDZE, NIKOLAI SEMENOVICH (1864-1926), Georgian leader of the Menshevik faction in the third and fourth Dumas. In 1917, he was the first chairman of the Petrograd Soviet.

CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY, the assembly that was to set up a new democratic form of government after the revolution of March, 1917. Long delayed by the Provisional Government, elections were held after the Bolshevik seizure of power in November. Having too few delegates to control the assembly, the Bolsheviks allowed it to meet for one session in January, 1918, and then dissolved it by force.

CYRIL (ca. 827-69) and METHODIUS (ca. 815-85), sons of a Byzantine official, the earliest Christian missionaries to the Slavic peoples in the ninth century. Their work included design of a modified Greek alphabet to accommodate Slavic sounds, the creation of Old Church Slavic as a language, and translations of Byzantine Christian scripture and ritual.

DAVID, EDUARD HEINRICH RUDOLPH (1863-1930), a prominent leader of the German Social Democratic party in the decade prior to and during World War I. When the party split he sided with the majority S.D.'s and became the first president of the Weimar National Assembly in 1919.

DECEMBRISTS: the name given to a group of insurrectionists, primarily army officers, who tried to raise a rebellion in December 1825, between the reigns of Alexander I and Nicholas I. The attempt lacked widespread support and was easily put down, but it was the first revolution in Russia in the name of progressive principles and it received an honored place in the revolutionary tradition.

DMITRII IVANOVICH DONSKOI (1350-89), the grand prince of Moscow who led his people to a victory over the Mongols (Tartars) at Kulikovo field, near the Don River, in 1380.

DOBROLIUBOV, NIKOLAI ALEKSANDROVICH (1836-61), from a clerical background became the main literary critic of *The Contemporary*, in the years 1856-61, when it was the leading radical journal of the day. His method of criticism moved quickly from the author's intent to an analysis of the society reflected in the work. His own values were secular, and he impatiently advocated change.

DOSTOEVSKII, FEDOR MIKHAILOVICH (1821-81), the towering Russian literary artist in the views of the authors of *Out of the Depths*. They valued his probing of the religious character of the Russian mind and saw him as a strong champion against the shallow and destructive materialism of their age. **DUMA:** the representative parliament set up after the 1905 revolution as a concession by the autocratic power of the tsar. Although its powers were limited, and its electoral base undemocratic, it did participate in the process of decision making in late Imperial Russia.

DVORIANIN: (pl. *dvoriane*), a term in its earliest usage referring to the servants of a Kievan Prince. By the eighteenth century it was the general term for nobility.

EASTERN RITE CATHOLICISM: the religious position of those Ukrainians and White Russians who, in 1595, while living under Polish and Lithuanian rule, left the authority of the Orthodox Church and affiliated with Rome. Certain rituals and Church practices of Orthodoxy were retained.

EFREMOV, DOMINIK IVANOVICH, pseud. of Mikhail Efremovich Shteinman (1881-1925), joined the Russian Social Democrats in 1902 and, during the Bolshevik revolution, served on the Moscow Party Committee.

ELIZABETH PETROVNA (1709-62), the daughter of Peter the Great who was empress of Russia from 1741 to 1762. She came to the throne by a *coup d'état* with the support of those opposed to the strong German influence at the court of her predecessors. Despite her own indolence, her reign confirmed Russia's position as a European power.

ENTENTE: a term referring to Great Britain and France, since the conclusion of their entente agreement on 8 April 1904. The authors of *Out of the Depths* also use the term in a more general sense, as those nations opposed to the Central Powers in World War I.

FUTURISM: an art and literary movement that developed in the years before World War I in Western Europe and Russia. It negated artistic and cultural val-

ues and traditions, affirming such innovations as the cult of technology and machines and ungrammatical forms of expression.

GERSHENZON, MIKHAIL OSIPOVICH (1869-1925), was a literary critic and historian who also wrote on topics of philosophy and religion. Although earlier the editor of *Signposts*, he made peace with the Soviet State, and, after the revolution, lectured at the Literary Art Institute in Moscow and held a high position in the Academy of Arts and Sciences.

GOGOL', NIKOLAI VASIL'EVICH (1809-52), was a leading Russian writer whose works were almost uniformly misunderstood by contemporary critics. In his time, he was hailed as the founder of Russian realism and as a social critic. In fact, his satires treat human foibles, more than social problems, and many of his works contain deep religious and spiritual themes.

GOING TO THE PEOPLE: the attempt made by the populist youth in the 1870s to leave their comfortable student lives and work among the people. The youth hoped both to learn from and to teach the people, and they wanted to develop the people's revolutionary consciousness. Rarely did they meet with success, and sometimes they were turned over to the police by the peasants.

GOLITSYN, DMITRII MIKHAILOVICH (1665-1737), an aristocratic Russian statesman during the reigns of Peter the Great and his immediate successors. In the dynastic crisis of 1730, Golitsyn sought to impose limitations on the power of the monarch which would have been favorable to the highest aristocracy.

GONCHAROV, IVAN ALEKSANDROVICH (1812-91), a Russian novelist whose best known work, *Oblomov* (1859), gently satirizes the indolent Russian landowner.

GOR'KII, MAKSIM (Aleksei Maksimovich Peshkov) (1868-1936), was a radical writer who gave financial support to Lenin and the Bolsheviks. His works, often in the form of short sketches, treat the underside of Russian life with uncompromising realism. After the revolution, he tried to use his influence to aid artists and intellectuals and preserve Russia's cultural heritage. He emigrated in 1921, returned to the Soviet Union in 1928, and later was killed in the purges.

GRAMOTA: a Russian term referring to a broad variety of official documents, charters, agreements, and decrees.

GRIMM, ROBERT (1881-1953), was a member of the Swiss Social Democratic (Marxist) party. During World War I, he took a moderate internationalist position and was Chairman of the International Socialist Committee. At the Zimmerwald conference, he sought to end the war on the basis of no annexations or indemnities.

GUCHKOV, ALEKSANDR IVANOVICH (1862-1936), from a Moscow merchant family background, studied history and philosophy, and was the founder and leader of the Octobrist party after the 1905 revolution. On the right wing of the liberal movement, he was minister of war in the first Provisional Gov-

ernment. He emigrated soon after the Bolsheviks came to power and died in Paris.

HEGESIAS OF CYRENE (3rd c. B.C.), head of Cyrenaic school who advocated suicide in one of his works. His lectures in Alexandria caused a scandal and led to his expulsion.

HERZEN, ALEKSANDR IVANOVICH (1812-70), the illegitimate son of a wealthy landowner. He played a prominent role in Moscow discussion circles in the 1830s and 1840s. In 1847, he left Russia with a large fortune and set up an emigre press in London. His influential bi-weekly *Kolokol* (The Bell) in the late 1850s and early 1860s was a force in urging the government to liberate the peasants in 1861. Herzen's writings helped form the radical generation of the 1860s and he provided some of the theories behind the populist world view. In the 1860s extreme radicals felt his caution betrayed the revolutionary cause.

HAGIA SOPHIA: the masterpiece of Byzantine Christian church architecture in Constantinople (Istanbul) dating from 537. It was converted to a Mosque with the Turkish conquest in 1453, and as such became a symbol of a victory of Islam over Christianity that some Orthodox Christians sought passionately to reverse.

HOLY ALLIANCE: a proposal made by Alexander I of Russia, in 1815, that European rulers be guided by Christian principles in their relations to their subjects and to each other. Ultimately accepted by all European rulers except the King of England, the Pope, and the Sultan, the Holy Alliance came to symbolize the reactionary policies of the three eastern powers: Russia, Austria, and Prussia.

HUMBOLDT, WILHELM VON (1767-1835), a Prussian statesman and scholar best known for his efforts to organize the coalition that finally defeated Napoleon and his studies in philology.

HUNS: Asiatic nomads, under the leadership of Atilla, who ravaged the Roman empire beginning in the late 4th century A.D. More broadly the term is used to denote ruthless and wanton destructiveness.

INTELLIGENTSIA: a collective label used in Russia since the middle of the nineteenth century to describe one group within the larger community of intellectuals. An *intelligent* was a person who assumed the task of asking the large questions of judgment and evaluation of his or her society and nation: What is Russia's fundamental character? What is her destiny? What is the good society? How may governmental authority be legitimized? Discussion among the nineteenth century intelligentsia frequently led to positions of opposition and revolutionary action.

INTERNATIONAL, THE: (as used in the text of *Out of the Depths*) refers to the left-wing members of the Second International whose program was a rejection of the "defensist" policies of the majority, and who sought to transform international war into internal civil war in the name of social revolution.

IVAN IV THE TERRIBLE (1530-84), the Russian ruler who first assumed the title "Tsar of all the Russians." He expanded Russian influence in the lower Volga area, but he failed to win a position on the Baltic Sea. His reign is associated with vicious attacks on the old boiar aristocracy in an assertion of autocratic power.

IVANOV, ALEKSANDR ANDREEVICH (1806-58), was an artist who was one of the first to treat religious themes in a Western style. His best known work is *The Appearance of Christ to the People*.

KADETS: the name given to members of the liberal Constitutional Democratic Party, founded in October, 1905, by P. N. Miliukov. After the fall of the monarchy, the Kadets held the majority of seats in the first Provisional Government, only to see their position erode in the course of 1917. Yet they polled almost two million votes in the elections to the Constituent Assembly in December, 1917.

KAPLAN, FANIA EFIMOVNA (DORA) (1890-1918), a member of the Socialist Revolutionary party, angered by the Bolshevik dispersal of the Constituent Assembly and their signing of the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk. She attempted to assassinate Lenin on 30 August 1918, which attempt became the occasion for the so-called "Red Terror" in the months to follow.

KASSO, LEV ARISTIDOVICH (1865-1914), the minister of education from 1911 to 1914, noted for his strict measures against the student movement and his intolerance of professors with progressive views.

KAUTSKY, KARL (1854-1938), an Austrian-born Marxist theoretician and publicist. He was an important figure among the German Social Democrats where his position was considered "centrist," against both the revisionism of Eduard Bernstein and the radical left position of Rosa Luxemburg. He condemned the Bolshevik revolution as anti-democratic and anti-Marxist.

KERENSKII, ALEKSANDR FEDOROVICH (1881-1970), a lawyer turned politician who was elected to the fourth State Duma in 1912 as a representative of the Labor Group (*trudoviki*). Early in the revolution of 1917 he was a leader in the Petrograd Soviet and also became minister of justice in the first Provisional Government. He was president of the Provisional Government from June until its overthrow by the Bolsheviks in November. He spent the rest of his life in emigration conducting anti-Soviet activities. His failures of leadership are frequently blamed for the inability of the revolution to withstand the criticisms of the non-democratic left.

KHLYSTY (FLAGELLANTS): members of one of the Russian mystic sects who had the reputation of working themselves into an ecstatic religious frenzy during their services.

KHOMIAKOV, ALEKSEI STEPANOVICH (1804-60), a leader of the older generation of Slavophiles who stressed the importance of religion in the historical process. His views included a disdain of the Reformed and Catholic churches of the West and a claim that Russian Orthodoxy was superior because of its unique combination of freedom and authority.

KHRAPOVITSKII, ANTONIUS (18??-19??), was elected to the Metropolitan see of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church in 1918 and was staunchly opposed to the Ukrainian separatist movement.

KISTIAKOVSKII, BOGDAN ALEKSANDROVICH (1868-1920), a journalist and student of constitutional law and society. After 1905 he edited the journal *Critical Survey* (*Kriticheskoe obozrenie*) devoting attention to the problems of minority and human rights in a liberal polity.

KLIUCHEVSKII, VASILII OSIPOVICH (1841-1911), from 1882 a popular professor at Moscow University and one of Russia's leading historians. His political views were closest to the Kadet party and his historical views, although eclectic, tended to emphasize political and economic factors.

KOKOSHKIN, FEDOR FEDOROVICH (1871-1918), a Kadet leader who served with Kerenskii as comptroller of finances in the coalition government formed in August, 1917. Arrested by the Bolsheviks later in the year, he was brutally murdered in January, 1918, while held in a hospital.

KORNILOV, LAVR GEORGIEVICH GENERAL (1870-1918), rose from the ranks to the highest military command. He was appointed Supreme Military Commander under the Provisional Government. Kornilov sought to stem the disintegration of the army, and in August, 1917, he led an unsuccessful attempt to replace the Kerenskii government because he believed it could not or would not control the extreme left.

KORNILOV, VLADIMIR ALEKSEEVICH (1806-54), a Russian vice-admiral, who organized the defense of Sevastopol during the Crimean War and was killed early in the siege.

KOVALEVSKAIA, SOF'IA VASIL'EVNA (1850-91), was a mathematician, publicist, and novelist. Her literary works include *Memoirs of a Youth* (*Vospominaniia detstva*, 1890) and the *Nihilist* (*Nigilistka*, 1891).

KRONSTADT REVOLT: an anti-Bolshevik uprising of sailors in the major naval base near Petrograd (Leningrad) in March, 1921. Under the slogan "Soviets Without Bolsheviks" they demanded greater political and economic freedoms. Although brutally put down by the Bolshevik government, the revolt clearly influenced the adoption of economic concessions collectively known as the New Economic Policy.

KROPOTKIN, PETR ALEKSEEVICH (1842-1921), a member of an aristocratic Moscow family who gave up a scientific career in the early 1870s to become a revolutionary activist. After escaping from a tsarist prison he went to Western Europe where he became a widely-known philosopher of anarchism. He supported Russia's role in World War I and disapproved of the Bolshevik seizure of power.

KRYZHANOVSKII, SERGEI EFIMOVICH (1862-1934), an official in the Ministry of the Interior who played an important role in drafting the laws that set up the Duma, in 1905, and changed the electoral system in 1907.

KULIKOVO FIELD: site of the victory of the grand prince of Moscow, Dmitrii

Donskoi, over the Tatar Golden Horde in 1380. Although Tatar dominance was soon reestablished, the battle has retained its importance as a national symbol of resistance to foreign domination.

LARIN, IU. (Mikhail Zal'manovich Lur'e) (1882-1932) joined the revolutionary movement in 1900. In the early years of the Soviet state he worked on committees and commissions of the Supreme Council of the National tional Economy.

LAVROV, PETR LAVROVICH (1823-1900), a professor of mathematics turned radical activist. His most influential work, *Historical Letters*, in 1868-69, made an influential appeal to "critically-minded individuals" to repay the moral debt owed to the peasants for their labor that made possible the privileges of others. In the populist movement of the 1870s, Lavrov led a more moderate group than Bakunin.

LENIN, VLADIMIR, IL'ICH (1870-1924) (V. I. UL'IANOV), founder of the Bolshevik faction of the Russian Social-Democratic (Marxist) party. Against all odds, and often against other party leaders, he led the Bolsheviks to a successful seizure of power in October/November of 1917. From the perspective of the authors of *Out of the Depths*, Lenin represented the ultimate demagogue who would agitate the masses to create chaos as a path to his own party's power.

LEONT'EV, KONSTANTIN NIKOLAEVICH (1831-91), a doctor and diplomat who, beginning in the 1870s, devoted himself to writing and criticism. His highly individualistic works contained a rejection of Western industrialism and democracy, a stress on Russia's Byzantine heritage, aestheticism, a rigid Orthodoxy, and dislike of the common herd.

LESKOV, NIKOLAI SEMENOVICH (1831-95), a writer whose early anti-nihilist novels were severely condemned by radical critics. He then turned to stories and novels that portrayed traditional characters of provincial life, and were often in the form of a *skaz*, that is, told by a narrator claiming to have witnessed the events. The rich collection of his characters speak with an equally rich variety of Russian dialects and modes of expression.

LUNACHARSKII, ANATOLII VASIL'EVICH (1875-1933), a dramatist and critic, and a Marxist since the early 1890s, who sided with Lenin in the split with the Mensheviks in 1908. Lenin disapproved of his attempts in 1908 to see Marxism as a "scientific and human religion." Lunacharskii returned to Russia in 1917 to serve the Bolshevik cause as the first commissar of enlightenment. In the revolution he sought to save parts of Russia's traditional culture, as a new Soviet culture was being built.

MENSHEVIKS: the moderate faction of Russia's Social-Democratic (Marxist) party that split with Lenin's Bolsheviks in 1903 on issues of party organization and elitism. In 1917, the Mensheviks gave support to the Provisional Government and the democratic procedures of a Constituent Assembly. Not of one mind, they generally opposed too rapid a move toward exclusive socialist rule,

because the level of Russia's social and economic development would not support it.

MEREZHKOVSKII, DMITRII SERGEEVICH (1865-1941), a writer and critic who played an important role in the new wave of philosophical and religious discussions in St. Petersburg around 1905. His religious views tended toward the unorthodox Third Testament, and were condemned by several authors in *Out of the Depths*.

METROPOLITAN PHILIP, SAINT (Fedor Stepanovich Kolychev) (1507-69), a churchman from an ancient boiar family who served as metropolitan of the Russian Orthodox Church (then the highest position) from 1566 to 1569, during the reign of Ivan IV, the Terrible. Philip objected to Ivan's lawless conduct, in general, and his persecution of certain boiars, in particular. After he refused to bless the tsar, Ivan had him deposed and later murdered. In the Russian tradition, Philip is a martyr who died objecting to an unjust use of authority.

MIKHAILOVSKII, NIKOLAI KONSTANTINOVICH (1842-1904), a nobleman turned radical journalist, literary critic, and social theorist. From 1860 on, he managed to give expression to democratic and populist ideas while remaining in Russia. Denying God, he also denied the deterministic implications of materialism, and sought a social theory based on the free choice of ideals by the progressive intelligentsia. His appreciation of the Russian peasant commune led him to disputes with the Marxists.

MILIUKOV, PAVEL NIKOLAEVICH (1859-1943), a Russian historian who became a leader of the Kadet party. An unyielding critic of the old regime, he nonetheless supported Russia's cooperation with the Allies and, as the first minister of foreign affairs in the Provisional Government, tried to keep Russia in the war to gain advantage over Turkey. Forced to resign in May, 1917, he remained active in the Kadet cause in Russia in 1917, and then later in emigration he continued anti-Bolshevik activities.

MININ, KUZ'MA (?-1616), a merchant of Nizhnii-Novgorod who was one of the organizers and leaders of the national resistance to the Polish and Swedish invasion during Russia's Time of Troubles. In the Russian nationalist tradition, along with Prince Pozharskii, he is a popular hero and a symbol of sacrifice for the national cause.

MIR: the Russian word for the traditional village commune. The organization was self-governing, and in some cases assumed responsibility for the well-being of its members by periodic land redistribution. The *mir* also had some control over the behavior of its individual members.

MONOMAKH, VLADIMIR VSEVOLODOVICH (1053-1125), was a Kievan prince who defended Rus' against the Polovtsy, but was unable to unify the other warring princes. According to legend, he received royal insignia from the Byzantine emperor.

NAKHIMOV, PAVEL STEPANOVICH (1802-55), was an outstanding naval

commander in the wars against the Turks who died in the Crimean War defending Sevastopol'.

NARODNICHESTVO, *NARODNIK*, the term *Narodnichestvo* is built on the Russian word *narod* (people), and refers to a social theory that developed after the disappointing serf reform of 1861. It was not a strictly defined doctrine, but consisted of such concepts as: the appreciation of the peasant and his way of life as uncorrupted and pure; the debt of intellectuals and the privileged before the people; the idea that the peasant commune could serve as the model or basis for a unique Russian socialism; and the idea that Russia could avoid the evils of western industrialization. These ideas were fundamentally at odds with Marxism, especially on the issue of whether Russia had to follow the path taken by the West. With some variations, *narodnichestvo* inspired the development of Russia's later peasant party, the Socialist Revolutionaries. A *narodnik* is one who adheres to the general position.

NECHAEV, SERGEI GENNADIEVICH (1847-82), a notorious and unscrupulous revolutionary whose betrayals and deceit left a black mark on the revolutionary movement of the 1860s and 1870s. In 1869 he met M. A. Bakunin in Switzerland and with him composed the *Catechism of a Revolutionary* which claimed that the revolutionary, in pursuit of his goal, should place himself beyond moral restraint and even human feelings. That same year, Nechaev engineered the murder of a student in Moscow, who dared question his authority in an underground revolutionary cell. That murder inspired Dostoevskii to explore the revolutionary mentality in *The Devils*.

NEKRASOV, NIKOLAI ALEKSEEVICH (1821-78), was a poet and journalist who was most popular with the radical generation of the 1860s. Along with Chernyshevskii, he edited *The Contemporary* in the late 1850s and early 1860s when it was Russia's most popular journal. His poetry treats the life and suffering of the people.

NEKRASOV, NIKOLAI VISSARIONOVICH (1879-1940), an engineer who became a political leader in the left wing of the liberal movement as a member of the Kadet party. In 1917, he held several ministerial portfolios in successive Provisional Governments, and as a close collaborator of Kerenskii's, broke with the Kadets. He remained in the Soviet Union after the revolution, working in the field of consumer cooperatives.

NICHOLAS, SAINT (THE MIRACLE-WORKER), was one of the earliest saints venerated in Kievan Russia, dating back to at least the tenth century. Considered *the* national saint, his name is associated with the supernatural powers of miracles, compassionate love, and charity. By tradition, his powers could assure victory.

NICHOLAS I (Nikolai Pavlovich) (1796-1855), the Russian tsar from 1825-55, whose reign was characterized by a firm and inflexible bureaucratic absolutism. Intolerant of any progressive thought, he ruled under the formula of "Orthodoxy, autocracy, and nationality." His reign was the context for the early development of the Russian intelligentsia.

NIHILISM: the term used in both a narrow and broad sense. In its narrow definition, it refers to Russian radicals of the late 1850s and 1860s who refused to accept institutions or ideas on traditional authority. They took the pose of total denial as a way of saying that *everything* should be held up to scrutiny to see what was worth preserving. In its broad definition, the term nihilism refers to a philosophical position that either lacks or positively denies, absolute values. In *Out of the Depths*, the term is generally used in the latter sense.

OBROK: a term in old Russia generally referring to annual payments for tax, rent, or in return for services. On landed estates under serfdom, *obrok* was the quitrent paid by peasants to their masters in lieu of labor services.

OCTOBRISTS; members of the "Union of 17 October," a party founded in November, 1905, whose program affirmed the Imperial Manifesto of October, 1905, establishing the State Duma. Although considered liberal, the Octobrists stood to the right of the Kadets and accepted an executive branch of government responsible to the emperor and not the legislature.

OLD BELIEVERS (*starovery*), one of several terms referring to those who rejected the reforms of Orthodox Church ritual initiated by Patriarch Nikon in 1654. Considered schismatics, they were persecuted in Russia up to 1905. Their firmness of belief often commanded respect even among those who thought them backward and unenlightened.

OSTROVSKII, ALEKSANDR NIKOLAEVICH (1823-86), was Russia's leading playwright in the later nineteenth century. The great strength of his more than forty plays lies in his detailed presentation of characters and characteristics from Russia's social milieu, especially that of the merchant class. Though his portrayals are often unflattering, his use of colloquial speech gives them a strong national appeal.

OVER-PROCURATOR: Since 1721, when Peter the Great "reformed" the Orthodox Church, replacing the patriarch with the Holy Synod, the Over-procurator was, in effect, the head of the Church, and the symbol of Church dependence on the state. With the revolution, this system was abolished.

PAUL I (Pavel Petrovich) (1754-1801), the son of Catherine the Great. In his brief reign he tried to reverse many of his mother's policies. That attempt, along with a number of personal tyrannical acts, led to his unpopularity among the nobility. He was murdered by cohorts of his son, Alexander I (1801-25).

PETER I, THE GREAT (1672-1725), was the titanic figure of Russian history who, as tsar, acted with unrelenting pressure and brutality to hasten the process of westernization. He built Russia's military might; forced its entry into European politics, and tried to adopt those Western techniques and institutions that would insure the state's efficient functioning. Peter's detractors, from his own day up through the nineteenth-century Slavophiles, accused him of betraying Russia's own national tradition and introducing a fatal division between the gentry, who became Westernized, and the peasants and some others in society who did not.

PISAREV, DMITRII IVANOVICH (1840-68), was a radical literary critic of the 1860s whose name is most often associated with nihilism, in the narrow sense of that term which implies a refusal to accept anything on authority or tradition. "Pisarevism" as used in *Out of the Depths* implies reckless negativism. **PLEKHANOV, GEORGII VALENTINOVICH** (1856-1918), the social theorist and philosopher from a minor gentry background who joined the populist revolutionary movement in the 1870s and then, after the collapse of many of the populist efforts, moved over to Marxism in the early 1880s. For years he was the leading Marxist theoretician, denying the possibility of a direct move to socialism by way of a peasant revolt. Russia had first to experience a bourgeois democratic revolution. He adopted a defensist position during World War I, and in 1917 found himself unable to influence Bolshevik actions either on the war issue, or on their direct move toward socialism. He died in 1918, harassed by the Red Guards as "an enemy of the people."

POCHVENNIK, an adherent to the position of *pochvennichestvo*, a literary-social tendency of the 1860s, related to Slavophilism. Dostoevskii, A. A. Grigor'ev, and N. N. Strakhov called on educated society to find inspiration in the Russian people and the Russian soil, instead of the decaying West.

POLIVANOV, ALEKSEI ANDREEVICH (1855-1920), was a prominent military commander who was appointed minister of war in 1915. His opposition to Nicholas II's presence at the front and pressure from Alexandra and Rasputin led to his dismissal in 1916, despite his effectiveness in that post. He had sympathy for the Duma's Progressive Bloc, and in 1917 could cooperate with the Petrograd Soviet in redefining the rights of soldiers. He served later in the Red Army.

POLOVTSY: A central Asian, Turkic people who occupied steppe areas north of the Black Sea in the eleventh and twelfth centuries and posed a threat to the Kievan state. They are also known as Cumans.

POMESHCHIK: from the fifteenth century, a term referring to the possessor of a *pomest'e*, a fief or grant of land held conditionally on military service to a higher authority. When the conditional nature of the grant eroded in the eighteenth century, the term was applied loosely to noble landowners.

POTEBNIA, ALEKSANDR AFANAS'EVICH (1835-91), a Ukrainian and Russian philologist concerned with the relationship of language to thought. He participated actively in the definition and study of Ukrainian culture.

POZHARSKII, DMITRII MIKHAILOVICH, PRINCE (1578-1642), a Russian nobleman, statesman, and military commander, was one of the organizers and leaders of the national resistance to the Polish and Swedish invasion during Russia's Time of Troubles. He is best remembered in the Russian nationalist tradition for his role in the liberation of Moscow in 1612.

PROGRESSIVE DUMA BLOC: a coalition of Kadets, Octobrists, and Progressive Nationalists in the Duma in August, 1915. The Bloc's demands for change met with total rejection by the tsar's government, thus alienating even relatively moderate critics.

PUGACHEV, EMEL'AN IVANOVICH (ca. 1742-75), was a Don Cossack, and veteran of several military campaigns who led a large scale Cossack and peasant rebellion, in 1772-75, during the reign of Catherine the Great. Although there were elements of social revolution in his movement, he sought legitimacy for his movement with the claim that he was Peter III, who had been deposed by Catherine the Great and murdered by her supporters a decade earlier. Pugachev's name was thus associated with mass violence and the righteous anger of social revolution. The term *Pugachevism* also implied that the movement could not be controlled.

PUSHKIN, ALEKSANDR SERGEEVICH (1799-1837), was the leading Russian writer of the first half of the nineteenth century and Russia's most acclaimed poet. His works contributed most significantly to the development of the language of modern Russian literature. He showed sympathy with the protest movement that led to the abortive Decembrist revolt of 1825, but being in exile at the time he was not directly involved. Under Nicholas I, Pushkin received both patronage and annoying censorship and supervision. He was killed in a duel while at the height of his powers.

RADISHCHEV, ALEKSANDR NIKOLAEVICH (1749-1802), was a civil servant turned social critic whose book, *A Journey from St. Petersburg to Moscow* (1790) was an indictment of serfdom, arbitrary autocratic power, and censorship. The work was the first serious challenge to the established order from the perspective of progressive thought and became an inspiration to later revolutionaries.

RAKOVSKII, CHRISTIAN GEORGIEVICH (1873-1941), a revolutionary leader of Bulgarian origin, who joined the Bolsheviks in 1917 quickly rising to importance. During the Civil War he was prominent in the Ukraine. A member of the Communist Party Central Committee in the 1920s, he sided with Trotskii and was expelled in 1927. Readmitted to the Party in 1934, within a few years he became a victim of the purges.

RASPUTIN, GRIGORII EFIMOVICH (1872-1916), was a Siberian peasant who as an unordained religious figure rose to the highest political influence because of support by the royal family. His ability to aid the hemophiliac heir to the throne caused Nicholas II and Alexandra to consider him a holy man sent by God. Behind royal protection, Rasputin carried on a scandalous life, and corrupted others in St. Petersburg society with his theory that sin could lead to glorious salvation. Rasputin's favorites were given places in government to the detriment of Russia's war effort. In December, 1916, Rasputin was assassinated by relatives of the royal family.

RAZIN, (STENKA) STEPAN TIMOFEEVICH (?-1671), was a Don Cossack who led a major Cossack and peasant rebellion in 1670-71 in the area of south-eastern Russia. Attacking the nobles and officials, he did not attack the concept of the tsar's powers. After his execution in 1671, he became a folk hero in songs and legends.

RAZNOCHINTSY: meaning literally people of various or indefinite legal class designation. In the latter nineteenth century the term was more specifically applied to persons from lower or middle class, or clerical backgrounds, who tended to be radical Westerners.

REVOLUTION OF 1905: widespread but uncoordinated urban and rural disturbances that began with the troops firing on a worker demonstration in January and culminated in a general strike in October. Although seriously threatened by the united opposition of radical and liberal elements, the tsarist government survived by making concessions. The October Manifesto, promising civil liberties and participation in government of an elected Duma, effectively split the liberal opposition. Revolutionary and left liberal groups were disappointed as the monarchy entered a "constitutional period" with much of its power intact.

RITTIKH, ALEKSANDR ALEKSANDROVICH (1868-?), held important posts in the Main Administration of Land Organization and Agriculture. He was minister of agriculture from January to March, 1917.

ROPSHIN, V. (Boris Viktorovich Savinkov) (1879-1925), was a Socialist Revolutionary and terrorist who engineered several political assassinations in the late Imperial period. He wrote novels describing the experiences and psychology of the terrorists. In 1917 he served briefly in the Provisional Government.

ROZANOV, VASILII VASIL'EVICH (1856-1919), a prominent Russian critic, writer, and philosopher. He was best known for his interpretations of Dostoevskii, which clearly influenced several of the authors of *Out of the Depths*.

SCHEIDEMANN, PHILIPP (1865-1939), a long-time member of the German Social Democratic party who served as party secretary and Reichstag member. His leadership helped to direct the Marxist revolutionary party toward parliamentary participation. Early in World War I he led his party to support of the government. Later in the war he advocated peace without annexations or indemnities.

SERAFIM OF SAROV, SAINT (1757-1833), was an outstanding example in modern Russian Church history of the monk (*starets*) who retired for long years to a hermitage for prayer and contemplation. When he returned to contact with the world he had achieved a holiness that was a powerful inspiration to others.

SERGIUS RADONEZHSKII, SAINT (1322?-92?), founder of the great Trinity Monastery at Zagorsk, who was an active supporter of the Muscovite Prince Dmitrii Donskoi. He served on diplomatic missions, and according to legend blessed Dmitrii and encouraged him in his victory over the Tatars in 1380 on Kulikovo field.

SHCHEDRIN, N. (Mikhail Evgrafovich Saltykov) (1826-89), was a Russian novelist of radical sympathies and the leading satirist of his day. He spent many years in civil service, yet he wrote trenchant criticisms of gentry privilege, of-

ficial tyranny, and merchant rapacity. The names of some of his characters entered the general language as symbols of the behavior he criticized.

SHEPTITSKII (SHEPTYTS'KYJ), ANDRII, METROPOLITAN (1865-1944), was a Ukrainian Church leader, who favored the Eastern rite of the Catholic Church and was involved in the movement for Ukrainian independence.

SHINGAREV, ANDREI IVANOVICH (1869-1918), a prominent and socially concerned Kadet leader and a minister of finance in the first Provisional Government, who was arrested by the Bolsheviks as part of a crackdown on the Kadet party. In January, 1918 he was brutally murdered while held captive in a hospital.

SHMIDT, ANNA NIKOLAEVNA, (1851-1905), a Russian mystic whose close contact with V. S. Solov'ev brought her to the attention of the authors of *Out of the Depths*. Her published writings include discussions of the "Third Testament" and the future in apocalyptic Christian terms.

SKOBELEV, MATVEI IVANOVICH (1885-1939), a Menshevik revolutionary elected to the Fourth State Duma. Early in 1917 he was chairman of the Petrograd Soviet, and later he served as minister of labor in the Provisional Government. In the 1920s he joined and served the Soviet state, but a decade later disappeared in the purges.

SKOROPADSKII, PAVEL PETROVICH (1873-1945), an Imperial Russian army general who became Hetman of Ukraine in a puppet government set up by the Germans during their occupation of the Ukraine in 1918.

SLAVOPHILE: in nineteenth-century discussions of Russia's character and destiny, a person who stressed Russia's uniqueness from, and superiority to, the West. Slavophiles frequently based their views on a belief in the uncorrupted nature of the Russian people and the special Christian virtues of Russian Orthodoxy.

SOBOR; the Russian word for council or assembly which, in general usage, may be either religious or secular. Slavophile writers, using the term as an adjective *sobornyi*, or in the word *sobornost'* (meaning to have the characteristics of a *sobor*) employed a more specialized usage with religious overtones. Thus *sobornost'* would refer to a sense of community based on shared religious values and convictions—the feelings that ideally would prevail at Church council.

SOCIAL DEMOCRACY: the general term used to describe political parties formed on the inspiration of Marxism. The term is used by several authors in *Out of the Depths* to describe the Marxist parties of Western Europe which, unlike the Bolsheviks, had learned to work for their objectives through a parliamentary system.

SOCIALIST REVOLUTIONARIES (S.R.s): a revolutionary political party formed in the early 1900s from a number of populist groups living abroad. Its goals were a democratic, federative state, and its land program called for "socialization of the land," meaning equalized peasant holdings under the

control of democratically organized communities. The party was badly split and, in 1917-18, could not act effectively against the Bolsheviks, although judging from the votes cast for the Constituent Assembly the S.R.s had greater support in the country.

SOKOLOV, NIKOLAI DMITRIEVICH (1870-1928), before the revolution he frequently served as defense council in political trials. In 1917, he was active in the Petrograd Soviet and alleged to be the author of the Soviet's Order No. 1, that sought to democratize relationships within the military.

SOLOV'EV, VLADIMIR SERGEEVICH (1853-1900), was a poet and the leading Russian philosopher and religious writer of the later nineteenth century. After a youthful interest in materialism, he underwent a spiritual crisis and emerged with a profound, complex, and mystical faith. Against Western rationalism and empiricism, he sought to synthesize religious philosophy, science, ethics, and mystical insights within the context of a universal church. He was considered by the authors of *Out of the Depths* to be the person who had done the most to give religion intellectual respectability.

SOPHIA: a concept referring to Divine Wisdom. For V. S. Solov'ev, "Sophia" became both an expression of the substance of God, and the rationale and end of creation, the principle in which God created the heavens and the earth. "Sophia" contains an idea which, at the end of history, will be revealed as the Kingdom of God.

SOREL, GEORGES (1847-1922), was a French social theorist who developed ideas on the creative role of myth and violence. His ideas contributed to revolutionary syndicalism.

SPIRIDONOVA, MARIA ALEKSANDROVNA (1889-1941), a member of the Socialist Revolutionary Party who assassinated a tyrannical vice-governor of Tambov, in 1906. In 1917, she led the left Socialist Revolutionaries in cooperation with the Bolsheviks. Angered by the treaty of Brest-Litovsk, she took part in the abortive revolt against Bolshevik rule in Moscow in July, 1918.

STARETS, a term for monk in general, and especially for a monk of exceptional spiritual powers.

STIRNER, MAX (Kaspar Schmidt) (1806-56) was a German writer whose book, *The Ego and Its Own*, in 1845, argued for an extreme individualism. Man ought not to be bound or limited by any power above himself, the state, God, or even philosophical abstractions. The individual ego was supreme.

STOLYPIN, PETR ARKAD'EVICH (1862-1911), a Russian statesman, who became minister of the interior in 1906 and dedicated himself to a ruthless repression of the revolutionary movement. His best known policy was an attempt to stabilize the countryside by creating a class of well-to-do peasants living apart from the communes. In 1907 he sought greater control over the Duma by restricting the franchise. He was assassinated in 1911 by a double agent of the police and the revolutionary movement.

STREL'TSY, literally means shooters or musketeers. The *strel'tsy* were the

first permanently organized troops in Muscovy. Formed in the mid-sixteenth century, during the reign of Ivan the Terrible, *strel'tsy* units served as infantrymen until, after a series of riots and revolts, they were abolished by Peter the Great in 1698.

STUDIT, SAINT FEODOR (759-826), a Byzantine churchman and writer. As abbot of the important Studit monastery, he maintained a strict monastic rule and he came into conflict with the Byzantine emperor over the question of church-state supremacy.

SUVOROV, ALEKSANDR VASIL'EVICH (1730-1800), a Russian general, who achieved stunning victories against the Turks and the French, and was beloved by Russian nationalists for his departure from the Prussian style of command.

TATARS: the term used in Russian history to refer to the Mongols who conquered and dominated most of the Russian land from the thirteenth to the fifteenth century, initially causing great destruction and cutting Russia off from direct contact with the dynamic changes then taking place in Western Europe.

TAYLOR SYSTEM: a system for production efficiency, based on time-motion studies. Generally considered by Socialists and labor union leaders to be a prime example of capitalist exploitation. In April, 1918, Lenin spoke of the need to apply the Taylor system to improve the performance of the Russian worker.

THIRD ELEMENT: refers to those professionals and semi-professionals who found employment in provincial Russia largely as the result of the 1864 reforms in local government: doctors, engineers, teachers, agronomists, etc. They often brought new and unsettling points of view to the areas they served.

THIRD ROME: a doctrine formulated by the monk Philotheus of Pskov, claiming that after the fall of Constantinople (the Second Rome) to the Turks in 1453, Moscow had become the most Christian kingdom, the Third Rome, and it would stand for all eternity.

THIRD TESTAMENT: was a stage in the evolution of Christianity as perceived by certain Russian thinkers such as D. S. Merezhkovskii. The first stage was the religion of God the Father—a religion of the flesh; the second stage was the religion of God the Son—a religion of the spirit. The third stage in the religion of humanity would synthesize the flesh and the spirit and be the ultimate expression of the faith.

TIME OF TROUBLES: the name given to the years 1605-13, when Russia experienced continuous turmoil as the result of power struggles among the elite, social revolution, and foreign invasion. The "Troubles" concluded with the establishment of the Romanov dynasty.

TIUTCHEV, FEDOR IVANOVICH (1803-73), one of Russia's greatest lyrical poets whose main themes are love and nature. Under the influence of German romantic idealism he viewed nature as a conflict of two worlds: Cosmos and

Chaos. For many years he published anonymously until discovered by the poet N. A. Nekrasov in 1850. Following a period of relative obscurity he was rediscovered later in the century by the Symbolists.

TOLSTOI, LEV NIKOLAEVICH (1828-1910), was the greatest of Russia's novelists, a social philosopher, and religious thinker. In the 1870s he experienced and developed an unorthodox religious and social philosophy based on non-resistance to evil, a simple Christ-like code of behavior, and an anarchistic denial of authority. Although excommunicated by the Orthodox Church in 1901, his teachings inspired a widespread movement.

TSERETELI, IRAKLII GEORGIEVICH (1882-1960), a Menshevik leader from Georgia elected to the Second Duma in 1907. In 1917, he became a leader of the Soviet Executive Committee and joined the Provisional Government as minister of communications and of the interior. He advocated coalition with moderate parties and was a foe of the Bolsheviks.

TULIAKOV, IVAN NIKITISH (1877-1920?), was a working class member of the Menshevik faction of the Social Democratic (Marxist) party. On the right wing of the Mensheviks, he was a member of the fourth Duma. During World War I, he was a socialist internationalist.

TURGENEV, NIKOLAI IVANOVICH (1789-1871), an early participant in the Decembrist movement, who advocated emancipation of the peasants. He left Russia before the actual uprising in 1825 and later turned to a long and distinguished career as a liberal economist, writing on such matters as financial and tax policy, agricultural affairs, and free trade.

TURGENEV, IVAN SERGEEVICH (1818-83), was a leading novelist of liberal persuasion whose *Sportsman's Sketches* in the 1840s and 1850s helped create a public opinion in favor of serf reform. His novels present an array of characters that personify many points of view and social attitudes of his day, from the nihilist and revolutionary to the obscurantist aristocrat.

UKAZ: a decree or order of the tsar or emperor. If specified, the term could also refer to a decree or order of the Imperial Senate or Church hierarchy.

USHAKOV, FEDOR FODOROVICH (1744-1817), was one of the founders of the Russian navy, and the originator of the new naval tactics that were effective against France in the 1790s.

VECHE: a town meeting, or popular assembly in Kievan Russia, composed of freemen and heads of household, with equal voice. Decisions of the *veche* were supposed to be unanimous.

VYBORG APPEAL: signed by 180 deputies in July, 1906, was an ill-fated attempt to arouse civil resistance because of the government's closing of the First Duma. The signers were sentenced to brief prison terms which meant that they could not be candidates for the next election.

WANDERERS, THE (*peredvizhniki*), was a name given to members of the Society for Travelling Art Exhibitions, which was formed in 1870 to encourage a new social content in art and to move art out of the exhibition halls and closer to the people.

WESTERNER: in nineteenth-century discussions of Russia's character and destiny, a person who stressed the affiliation and similarity of Russia to the West, and who saw Russia's future in Europe's present. Westerners were most likely to be liberals and socialists.

WILHELM II (1859-1941), the Emperor of the German Second Reich from 1888 to the revolution in Germany in 1918. Wilhelm's dismissal of Bismarck in 1890 led to a weakening of Russo-German ties, which his later efforts at personal diplomacy could not overcome. Although his rule had been overshadowed by military control during World War I, the authors of *Out of the Depths* could still see him as the symbolic head of the hated conquerors.

WITTE, SERGEI IUL'EVICH (1849-1915), after an early career in the railway industry, he became minister of finance in 1892. Under his leadership, the Russian industrial economy made rapid advances. His policies included high internal taxation weighing heavily on the peasants, a spirits monopoly, protective tariffs, introduction of the gold standard, and the encouragement of large-scale foreign investment.

ZHELEZNIAKOV, ANATOLII GRIGOR'EVICH (1895-1919), a revolutionary sailor who supported the Bolshevik revolution in 1917. As commander of the Taurida Palace guard, in January, 1918, he ordered the Constituent Assembly to disband after its first meeting. He was killed in the civil war.

ZIMMERWALD CONFERENCE (4-8 September 1915), a conference sponsored by Swiss and Italian socialists to try to find agreement among socialist leaders whose countries were currently at war. Lenin's "leftist" program of converting the imperialist war into a civil war against the bourgeois order was voted down in favor of the "centrist" program of Karl Kautsky, which condemned the war and called for peace with no annexations or indemnities. The tendency of the conference was to put international concerns before the interests of the nation.

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